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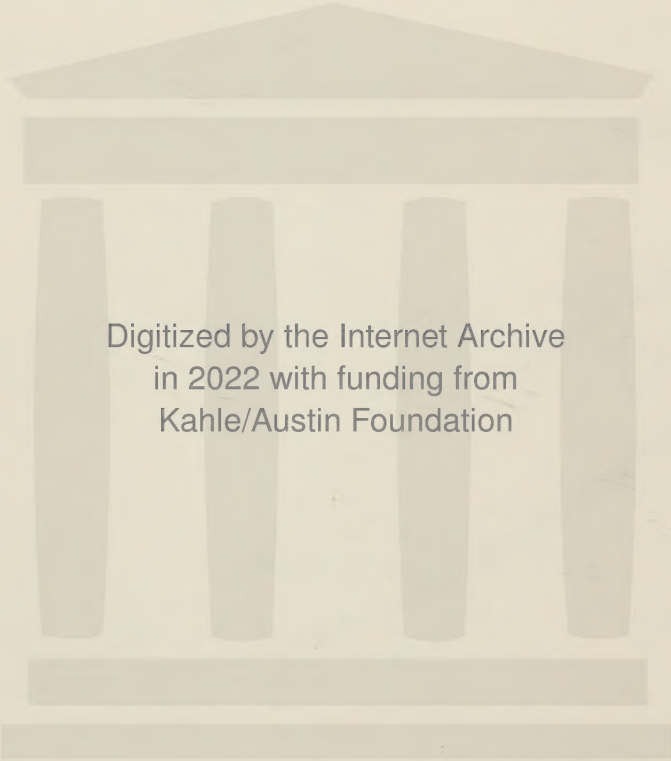
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IMPERIAL DEFENCE

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

FICTION

STRANGE TALES FROM
THE FLEET

THE DIARY OF A U-BOAT
COMMANDER

THE UNCHARTED SEA

HISTORICAL

A NAVAL LIEUTENANT,
1914-18

WESTERN CIVILISATION
AND THE FAR EAST

IMPERIAL DEFENCE

A Book for Taxpayers

By STEPHEN KING-HALL

With a preface by Viscount Haldane
of Cloan

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To
FRANCIS SPENCER.

PREFACE

THIS is a striking book. Although short, it is distinguished by comprehensive insight into a subject of which little is understood by the public. At the present time, when the question of Imperial Defence will probably engage the attention of a fresh Imperial Conference of the representatives of the Dominions and the Home Country, it is desirable that a book should appear in which a real endeavour is made to bring strategical opinion and the facts with which it is concerned into focus.

That the author is a sailor is apparent to a critical eye. The record at p. 127 of the confusion of views which in 1911 arose between the Admiralty and the War Office, as to the strategy to be pursued in the event of a war with Germany, is gently touched, but is a record of what to the soldier was no mystery. The Navy had then nothing resembling a true General Staff, and its Chiefs were opposed to anything of the sort. Their strategical ideas were not based on extensive study. The weight of opinion in the Committee of Imperial Defence was, after both sides had been heard, heavily adverse to the old-fashioned naval tradition. The Prime Minister intervened to give effect, with the majority of the active members of the Cabinet behind him, to the conclusions of the Committee of Imperial Defence. The Navy got a War Staff, though only in an inchoate form, for the first time. Since then this War Staff has been greatly developed. It thinks for the Admiralty, as the General Staff has since 1906 thought for the Army. The result is that the confusion of the past, about objectives and joint co-operation for their

attainment, is not likely to recur. Moreover, the organisation of the General Staff of the Army had by the end of 1907 been made definitely Imperial. That is to say, the Staff was carefully directed to avoid interference with local administration as distinguished from the thinking out of necessary war plans, in order to gain the confidence of the Dominion Governments. It regarded its members as public servants of each Dominion Government, that employed them when trained, in an organisation which was in point of principle as much Dominion and Indian as British, and there was established continuous exchange of the officers trained in a common school of military thought. The result was that Sir Wilfred Laurier, General Botha and the other Prime Ministers saw no difficulty, as early as 1907, in adopting the new organisation as one applicable to the whole Empire. It seemed to them, moreover, natural that the Committee of Imperial Defence, in which the ultimate study of the necessary strategy centred, should have as its President and Chief the British Prime Minister. I do not think that they contemplated the British Cabinet as a whole taking so large a control over the Committee as the organisation described at p. 122 of this book suggests. That organisation was the outcome of the report of Lord Salisbury's Committee of August, 1923. It suggested that about eight members of the British Cabinet should, in addition to the Prime Minister, sit regularly on the Committee of Imperial Defence. To do this amounted to giving the Committee something very like a written constitution as an instrument of the British Cabinet. Yet it seems essential that its constitution should be an unwritten one, capable of adaptation and of development as the changing circumstances of the Empire require response. This was attainable so long as the original principle of elasticity was adhered to. Under that principle the only permanent member was the President, the British

Prime Minister. He could summon whom he thought most likely to be of assistance to him, from this country and from any other part of the Empire. No one had a right to sit on the Committee: nor was it necessary that anyone should. For it was of the essence of the organisation that it was there only to think, and to exercise no administrative control excepting such as the Governments whom it advised chose to put into operation. In this respect it was in accordance with the principle on which the Imperial General Staff of the Army was finally based. Of course, it was bound to prove a body whose opinions carried great weight, not only with the Cabinet at home, to which the Prime Minister communicated them, but with the other Cabinets which it advised, but the authority was only a moral one.

Into the organisation which had thus grown up the Admiralty was not able to enter in its Imperial aspect as freely as could the War Office. For the War Staff of the Admiralty could not be distributed in the same way through the Dominions. The fleet, in order to be mobile, has to be concentrated and directed from a centre, and its War Staff has therefore to be somewhat restricted as regards distribution. As the result, it is less capable of working locally than is the case with the staffs of the armies of the Empire. This remains a difficulty for the Admiralty, but as its War Staff develops methods will probably be devised for mitigating it.

These lines about the staffs and the constitution of the Committee of Imperial Defence, and the analogy to the General Staff on its military side, have been written because such things have to be borne in mind in studying the general nature of Imperial Defence. On the other points the author of this book seems to me to have stated his case lucidly. He sums up pretty conclusively the administrative reasons against the

proposals for a Ministry of Defence. It is pretty plain that the Imperial character of our organisation for defence does not admit of the responsibility for its staff work being transferred from the Committee as now established to a single British Minister. The author says with truth that the contributions to Imperial Defence of the Dominions are likely, in the future, to consist in the development of their own forces, and that what is required is co-ordination of the great strategy of Imperial Defence. We can offer to our co-partners a good deal of accurate knowledge, based on actual experience, in the faith that attention will be paid to it, but we cannot attempt to influence their judgment in any direct fashion, whether the question relates to their Navy, Army or Air Forces.

Much material for reflection is contained in the couple of hundred pages of which this book consists. The chapter on "Disarmament" is, in particular, one which will repay study. The author, on the whole, abstains from much criticism. He does not even ask that the Committee of Imperial Defence should be taken more seriously than it actually is by the public, or be recognised as being the linchpin of the system treated as a whole. He refrains from drawing attention to the circumstance that the appointment of a Chairman, as recommended by Lord Salisbury's Committee, has not been continued, and that since the time of the Labour Government, which adhered to this, the Committee of Imperial Defence has been without a Chairman, whose duty it is, as the deputy of the Prime Minister, to give it daily attention and report the result. However anxious the Prime Minister may be to discharge adequately the responsibility which can fall to him alone, there is a limit to the time he can spare.

These and other questions remain for future solution. The advantage of this book is that it indicates the lines on which the solutions must proceed.

HALDANE.

INTRODUCTION

THE direct charge to the British taxpayer for the period 1926-27, which it is estimated will be spent on Defence Services, is approximately 116 million pounds. This is £317,810 a day, represents twenty-three pence in the £ income-tax and is about one-eighth of the national revenue.

This formidable sum of money is in the nature of an insurance premium paid by the inhabitants of Great Britain in order to enjoy a certain degree of security. The imperative need of economy in public expenditure makes it essential that every penny spent should produce useful results, and since expenditure on Defence is necessarily unproductive, so far as immediate dividends are concerned, it is especially desirable that the taxpayer should understand the need and destination of this expenditure.

Moreover, there are circumstances which make the present time suitable for the presentation to the taxpayer of a broadly fashioned survey of the problem of Imperial Defence.

For example :

If expenditure on the service of war debts, pensions and social services be considered sacrosanct, then for a

generation to come, expenditure on Defence is the only wide field of finance in which the hay of further economies can be made. Obviously, it is necessary to understand what is involved in Imperial Defence before it is possible to express an opinion as to whether these economies are feasible.

Secondly, the experiences of a great war are sufficiently distant to enable us to examine them with a certain amount of detachment, and yet not so remote as to have lost a sense of vigorous reality. An ounce of practice in war is worth a ton of theory on paper, and Imperial Defence to-day is wrong if, in any respect, it is not based on the latest war experience.

Thirdly, we are now at the close of the post-war period. The after-the-war political world is beginning to crystallise and new nations with new policies are beginning to stand out from the subsiding dust which has obscured the world for seven years. In Europe, Dictatorships are replacing democracies, whether for good or evil, for peace or for war, for long or short periods, none can say. Russia, for long an immense question mark, appears to be on the eve of important changes. In China, an intellectual renaissance of incalculable consequences is in full swing, whilst the domestic affairs of Japan are likely to have important international consequences during the next few years.

Fourthly, the question of how to reduce armaments is as urgent, yet almost as far from solution, as it ever

was. The next decade is likely to witness a number of attempts to solve this problem.

Lastly, a generation is beginning to shoulder the responsibilities of full citizenship to whom the events of the Great War and the practical necessity of Imperial Defence are histories and theory.

Although the omens seem propitious for a study of Imperial Defence, the reader will be disappointed if he imagines that this study will conclude with a golden remedy, some suggestion for radical reorganisation, which will save millions and at the same time increase our degree of security. My purpose is less ambitious but more practical. It is that of placing at the disposal of the taxpayer an outline of the problems which arise in considering the Defence of the British Empire. The details of these problems are complicated, but their framework is simple, and it is regrettable that much of the literature on this subject is characterised by a smoke cloud of technicalities which have nothing to do with the principles of the matter.

If a man be sufficiently intelligent to pay his income-tax (with a little assistance, if need be, from the local Commissioner), he will be sufficiently intelligent to understand the questions of Imperial Defence (with a little assistance, maybe, from this book). I wish to take this opportunity of informing civilian taxpayers that, although from a lack of experience in the art of writing, service authors are often guilty of obscuring

their thoughts in technicalities, yet our point of view with regard to Imperial Defence differs in no respect from the informed civilian point of view. We are the advisers and servants of this point of view. We are also taxpayers and men who enjoy life, and since it is our business to study war in general and Imperial Defence in particular, we have a sufficiently shrewd idea of the probable nature of any future war to make us at least as anxious, on personal grounds, as any other section of the community that this war shall remain in the womb of futurity.

STEPHEN KING-HALL.

NOTE.—Throughout this book the word “military” is used in its widest sense; that is to say, it covers Naval, Army, and Air Force matters.

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IMPERIAL DEFENCE

CHAPTER I

POLICY

I

BRITISH foreign policy is an expression which includes every aspect of the relations between the Governments of the British Empire and the Governments of foreign Powers.

These relations are always in existence.

They are normally conducted through the regular machinery of diplomacy, occasionally by exceptional methods such as the newspapers. Abnormally, they are conducted through the medium of conflict in many forms, and when this abnormal intercourse begins, war has broken out. For, as the soldier-philosopher Clausewitz remarked in one of his intelligible and useful passages, war is simply a continuation of policy. When war exists between the Empire and another Power, it is only the private relations between the belligerent peoples which are suspended; international relations continue and in a violently destructive manner.

It is therefore essential to be clear as to the nature of Imperial foreign policy at the present time before

considering the questions of defence which form a part of that policy.

II

Our foreign policy is contingent upon two variable matters. One is the internal state, the degree of growth of the Empire ; the other variable is the general state of the world, the existence or otherwise of Powers whose foreign policies appear to aim at objects unfavourable to our interests. During the nineteenth century the Empire was expanding territorially. This process came to an end in 1902, for the mandated territories entrusted to us after the war are in a class by themselves.

If the last century was a period of acquisition, it seems probable that the key-note of the present century will be consolidation. It is suggested that the outstanding processes in the development of the British Empire during the twentieth century will be as follows :

(a) Progress in self-government on the part of India and the Crown Colonies. It is not absurd to imagine that before the century has run its course, Dominions or analogous federations will be formed in the West Indies, West Africa, Central Africa and the Malay States area.

(b) The economic resources of the Empire will be developed to an immense extent, and the standard of living throughout the Empire will rise in proportion.

(c) Imperial communications will be improved.

(d) Improvements will be made in the machinery for co-ordinating into one foreign policy the aspirations of different parts of the Empire, and better methods will grow up for dealing with domestic differences of opinion.

(e) A redistribution of the white population of the Empire will take place.

This is a formidable programme. Formidable, worthy of a great people, but not fantastic or beyond their powers.

It is a programme depending for success upon statesmanship from our rulers, determination on the part of our peoples, confidence in our high destiny, humbleness of heart before God with honesty of conduct before men, and lastly, world-peace.

The satisfaction of all these requirements, save the last, lies with ourselves; the requirements of world-peace is beyond our sole control. It is the variable, the unknown, the question mark across our destiny.

It follows, therefore, that the supreme object of our foreign policy must be world-peace.

We must aim at maintaining a world-peace and not only a European or a Far Eastern or a Near Eastern peace, since the geographical distribution of our territories and the universal enterprise of our merchants make us susceptible to the breakdown of peaceful intercourse between nations in any part of the world.

In this matter we pay the consequences of controlling a great stake in the affairs of the world.

III

If it be agreed that the object of British foreign policy is the maintenance of world-peace, we are now in a position to outline the methods available for the attainment of this object.

Dealing first with general methods, there is the need of maintaining an organisation for war.

It sounds paradoxical that in order to maintain peace it should be necessary to be ready for war, but like most generalisations, this statement needs qualification in order to convert it into fact.

The doctrine that a nation, by piling up armaments, can make itself so strong that peace is assured because other nations are reduced to a state of terror of the strong man armed, has been proved over and over again, and as recently as 1914, to be utterly false. A peace obtained by these methods is a false dawn.

Armaments which are needlessly strong for self-defence either end in taking charge of the foreign policy of which they should be the reluctantly used servant, or else by their potential menace to the security of other nations they transform peaceful foreign policies into aggressive ones. This transformation is particularly deceptive, since it is invariably disguised as self-defence.

The whole business becomes a vicious circle, only to be escaped by a catastrophe such as a world war.

Nevertheless, a vast number of men in the present state of the development of civilisation are deluded by the belief that war is a paying proposition from the economic point of view. It is as yet inadequately realised that the complexities of modern civilisation and the ever-increasing economic oneness of mankind have produced natural laws which have a far stronger force than any artificial convention produced by the comparatively modern invention of nationalism. The corollary of the progress which is being made towards the economic unity of mankind is that it is becoming extraordinarily difficult to cut off another nation's national nose without spiting one's own national face. Until this truth is very much more widely recognised than it is at present, it would be putting an irresistible temptation in front of some people if the British Empire did not maintain an organisation of armed force of a strength sufficient to make believers in the profit of war pause before putting their theories to a practical test.

A second general method through which British policy should seek to maintain world-peace is the League of Nations idea. In this respect, history confirms the diagnosis of the object of British policy. The League is essentially an institution whose purpose is International peace, and since its inception no Power has

given the League more practical support than the British Empire.

Thirdly, there is disarmament. Armaments are not as a rule the cause of war, though inflated armaments may assist in the creation of a state of international mind which is ripe for war. Armaments are normally the effect of the war-idea; not its cause. Subject to the limitations arising from the first method of obtaining peace already described, British policy is not likely to be backward in supporting any practical scheme for the reduction of armaments.

So much for general methods by which British foreign policy may help to maintain world-peace.

Turning to particular methods, there is a system of regional pacts. These are treaties to which the British Empire is a party, and which aim at stabilising international conditions within a certain area. The Four-Power Treaty of Washington (13/12/21) was the first of this type of agreement, and had as its object the lessening of the chances of war in the Pacific area. The Locarno Treaties (1926) are the latest attempt in this direction and represent an attempt to avert another war between France and Germany.

Another particular method by which British policy aims at world-peace is illustrated by our manifest intention of working whenever possible in co-operation with the U.S.A. The Anglo-Japanese Alliance was wholly sacrificed on this altar, and many tall ships

were partially offered up thereon. Our incomes are paying tribute to this method to the tune of £100,000 a day for two generations.

Finally, there should be mentioned a number of acts of foreign policy committed since 1910 which have had as their object the reconstruction of Europe, the solution of the problems presented by the Inter-Allied debts, solutions which involve the British taxpayer in immediate sacrifice in the hope of achieving a well-founded world-peace, and generally a number of acts great and small designed to build a stable peace out of the ruins left by the Great War.

IV

The preceding brief summary of the methods already used, or likely to be used in the future by British foreign policy, in the pursuance of its principal object, which is world-peace, provides a foundation from which to examine what is perhaps the most important domestic problem now confronting the British peoples.

In order to keep the main thread of the argument as clear as possible, the expression "British foreign policy" has been employed as if it actually proceeded from one source, and as the product of one government.

Before the Great War this was, for all practical purposes, literally the case. The Government in London made its decisions, acted accordingly, and the Dominions acquiesced. The stress and strain of war eclipsed for

the time being the profound evolution in the Constitution of the Empire which was taking place, but when the Dominions signed the Peace Treaties and joined the League of Nations as separate units, it was obvious that a very noteworthy event had taken place.

Since 1919, statements have been made in the Dominion Parliaments which make it plain that, as a result of their war effort, they have entered man's estate. In theory this should have produced many consequences which in fact it has not.

If the Dominions have attained a position in the Empire in which Great Britain is *primus inter pares* and no more, and this certainly expresses the present constitutional theory as held throughout the Dominions and by most people in Great Britain, then the Dominions should, at the present moment, be bearing their proportional share of Imperial responsibility. In fact this is not so.

The expenditure per head on Imperial expenditure for the year 1925 were approximately as follows :*

			£	s.	d.
Great Britain	..	..	12	3	8
Canada	..	..	3	7	2
Australia	..	..	6	1	9
South Africa (white population)	..	..	1	19	3
New Zealand	..	..	5	1	9

* These figures are taken from a table on page 255 of the *Round Table*, No. 62.

This expenditure consists of the Defence services, the War Debt and War Pensions, and ignores certain minor expenditures on Imperial services which are incurred by Great Britain.

Although the Dominions bear a varying share of Imperial expenditure, they have all stated clearly that, in future, they cannot agree to being committed by the London Government to any foreign policy unless it is also approved of by the Dominion Parliaments.

This state of affairs is reflected by Article 9 of the Locarno Pact, which expressly asserts that Great Britain only signed for herself, and that the Dominions are not bound by the Treaty until they sign it for themselves.

This procedure may pass muster on an occasion, but it is evident that it reveals a falling away from the unity of policy and action which was displayed to the world by the British Empire delegation at Paris in 1919. It also reveals a situation which must appear inexplicable to foreigners, since it can be argued that at the present time it is possible for one part of the Empire to be waging war whilst the other parts are at peace. Legally that is impossible, and practically it is an absurd proposition, yet it is in fact a statement describing the consequences of the practical application of the theory of complete self-government on the part of the Dominions.*

* Lord Balfour, speaking in the House of Lords on July 24th, 1924, in the debate on the Draft Treaty of Mutual Assistance, said :

This anomalous state of affairs will have to be dealt with sooner or later. The Imperial Conference of 1923, which was not one of the most productive of the ten conferences which have been held, "agreed that it is desirable that no treaty should be negotiated by any of the governments of the Empire without due consideration of its possible effect on other parts of the Empire, or on the Empire as a whole. Steps should be taken, therefore, to ensure that all governments of the Empire likely to be interested should be kept informed and should have the opportunity of expressing their views and participating in the negotiations."

The resolution quoted above, then continued in the sense that treaties affecting only one part of the Empire should only be signed by a representative of that government, whilst International treaties of importance should be signed by representatives of all parts of the Empire.

These are admirable sentiments, but do not get to grips with the heart of the problem.

Power and responsibility are bed-fellows, and the Dominions cannot have the one without the other.

The extent to which this problem of the political

"I am unable to see how a system can work which seems to contemplate the possibility that Great Britain can be at war as a member of one of these subsidiary arrangements of nations—an arrangement of nations which is interested only in the European Continent—while the members of the British Empire in other continents are to remain indifferent, neutral, neither contributing to the result nor bearing the burdens. You cannot work the British Empire on those principles. . . ."

organisation of the Empire is solved in the future has a direct bearing upon the problems of Imperial Defence.

The present state of affairs is a gaping joint in the Imperial harness. At the present time it is far from clear what is to occur if some event should make it necessary for the Empire to declare war. It is easy to imagine circumstances in the conduct of foreign policy which call for rapid decisions, but the present relationship between the Dominions and Great Britain handicap rapidity of decision.

From a purely military point of view, a satisfactory solution of this problem would add greatly to our strength, and by this addition permit us, perhaps, to economise in costly material.

It is not the business of this book to suggest solutions for this difficult problem which is largely conditioned by the time and space factor. It is a problem which will doubtless figure prominently on the agenda of the next (1926) Imperial Conference, and it has been mentioned here at some length because it is a practical problem very closely connected with Imperial Defence, for the influence of British policy as an agent for world-peace depends as much upon whether the Empire can speak to the world with one voice, as it does upon the armed and economic forces which, in the last resort, are at the disposal of that policy.

CHAPTER II

WAR

“WAR,” wrote Clauzewitz, in an oft-quoted definition, “is a continuation of policy.”

If British foreign policy is working for peace and the foreign policy of X. Y. Z. is based on a plan of territorial expansion, through war if needs be, then the British Empire and X. Y. Z. will be politically at war, perhaps for years, before a shot is fired.

Amongst the methods described as being at the disposal of British foreign policy in its labours for world-peace, there was mentioned the influence which is derived from the possession by the Empire of adequate means of defence.

A foreign policy, whatever its object, is nothing more than a formula, unless there is a force somewhere in the background. Up to comparatively recent times this force meant armed force and nothing else. To-day, the term force must be given a far wider meaning, for it also covers economic forces and important abstract forces, such as world public opinion. It may be that in years or centuries to come the abstract force of world opinion may carry so much weight in the world that it will quite eclipse armed force as an influence

in man's calculations, but that day is yet distant, and even when it dawns it may be found that world public opinion is a governing power because of some form of International force which will be behind it. Though this international force will probably be economic in its nature, the principle that foreign policy ultimately depends upon force will be unchanged.

These are speculations, and at the present time British Foreign policy stands upon a foundation composed of two pillars. One is the general acquiescence of world opinion; the other is the power derived from its ability to employ force, both armed and economic. Obviously, if our policy were to become of such a nature that it incurred the strong disapproval of an important section of world opinion, then it would be prudent and logical to increase our armed force. Conversely, when our foreign policy meets with general approval and arouses little hostility—that is to say the diplomatic barometer shows “FAIR,” then it is feasible and logical to reduce our armed forces. It is interesting to note that a reduction in armed force may increase our economic force.

Since we do maintain armed forces at the present time, the inference is that in certain contingencies there will be war.

From the point of view of the subject of this book, this business of war is the state of international relationship which matters most, since it is only because of this

contingency of war that Imperial Defence is a live political question of the first order of importance. Imperial Defence problems are the effects of a cause, which cause is the risk of war, and it might lead to false conclusions if the effects were discussed without having sound ideas concerning the cause.

War as an activity of man can be thought about either generally or in particular cases. For the moment it is proposed to deal with it in a general manner, with the proviso that the whole subject of this book is British Imperial Defence and not French, or German, or Russian, or Japanese, or Italian problems of defence.

Although from the philosophical point of view, war, in its essential idea of a more or less violent conflict between peoples, has not changed, it is certain that the application of this idea has undergone great transformation during the past century.

Considered from the narrow but very human point of view of the professional warrior, war has now become monstrously degraded.

Not so many decades have elapsed since war was the exclusive privilege of professional warriors who had inherited the traditions of a feudalism in which war was not only a privilege but an aristocratic sport. Nowadays, we have reverted to that most primitive thing, horde warfare. War was an art; it has become a business, and a damnably uneconomic one into the bargain.

To some extent, the Continental idea of conscript

armies, the nation-in-arms theory, is responsible for this degradation, but the principal reason has been the ever increasing complexity of civilisation. Peaceful intercourse between nations has become so complicated. International edges, often ragged and friction-producing, make contact at a hundred points for every one which was common in the eighteenth century. Improved communications, international finance, the maze of world-trade illustrate the point. War, which is only a change in form of the intercourses of peace, has become complicated.

The aeroplane was the product of a demand of peace, but when the Wright brothers made their first flight they inevitably opened up a vast new chapter in war.

The same remarks apply to wireless and to the aniline dye industry, of which chemical warfare is the ill-begotten child.

War has not only become more complicated, but it has become more wasteful.

In the nineteenth century, when the Empire went to war that event produced very little effect upon its national life. The professional warriors went up to battle, a kind of gladiatorial combat upon a large scale took place, and sooner or later a peace was signed. It is true these were not world wars, but a study of English history during the Napoleonic wars leaves the impression that it was only when invasion appeared imminent that the national life was profoundly affected by the war which was going on. Nowadays it is very different.

Stupendous efforts are made to divert every ounce of national energy into a channel which may bring pressure on the enemy. It is a Herculean task to reorganise a great Empire at a moment's notice and convert an enormous and complicated machine designed to suit the conditions of peace into an engine of war. And because of the difficulties, because everything has to be done in a hurry, because square pegs have to be pushed into the nearest holes regardless of their shape, the whole business is immensely wasteful. In 1914 it was urgently necessary to block some of the entrances into Scapa Flow. In 1917 one looked regretfully at the remains of merchant ships which had been sacrificed for this purpose.

The professional warrior deplors this waste and laments the degradation of the art of war. There is a school of thought which believes that the pendulum has swung too far and that we should not see again, say in land warfare (if another great struggle took place) the spectacle of hundreds of thousands of men locked impotently in an immobile death-struggle, and engaged in a dreadful but indecisive competition as to which side could discharge the greatest number of tons of shell at the enemy line. This was a struggle which was the negation of strategy, and reduced Generals Commanding-in-Chief to the rôle of foremen supervising the movements of ponderous battering rams.

The school of thought, which criticises what they

describe as the essentially unintelligent and crude manner in which war was conducted between 1914-18, pin their faith in reform to the application of mechanics to war. They may be right, I am inclined to think they are, but we must be practical and remember that Imperial Defence, whilst giving due weight to theories as to what may happen in the future, must be founded on the facts of the present, and if by a misfortune we were involved in war during 1927 or 1928, there is no doubt that it would begin on lines not very different from those upon which it ended in 1918.

It is unwise to put your money on a plain number when the security of an Empire is at stake; zero and the chances of backing the wrong colour are sufficient gambles which cannot be avoided if one has to play at the table of International Roulette.

III

If the reader will reflect for an instant upon the manner in which the Empire was organised in 1918, and compare it with the present state of affairs (1926) he will, I think, be struck by the contrast thus created. This transition from war to peace has been slow, painfully slow it has seemed, and one is liable to forget the great changes which have taken place.

To the younger generation the post-war world is their standard world, and, to take a couple of illustrations, the fact that a bomb should have dropped in

Piccadilly Circus from an airship under fire from Hampstead Heath, or that a meat ticket was a thing of considerable value which had to be taken to the Berkeley Hotel and tendered in part exchange for a meal, are historical curiosities. The memory of the leave train from Victoria Station is not theirs.

It is therefore especially difficult for the younger generation, the 1908 vintage, to appreciate the difference between 1918 and 1926.

But, what must be realised is that if we were unfortunately forced to wage war, say in 1927 or 1928, we should find ourselves under the obligation of reverting as rapidly as possible to something resembling the 1918 state of affairs.

At a later stage in this book an attempt will be made to outline some of the differences which would in fact distinguish 1927 from 1918, but for the moment it will be best to avoid detail and confine ourselves to a general examination of what would have to be done.

The changes in national life which would become necessary on the outbreak of war can be divided roughly into two groups.

Firstly, an expansion of the fighting services which are maintained in time of peace.

Secondly, a reorganisation of the internal organisation of the Empire ; changing it from a peace to a war basis.

Each of these two main groups include a multitude

of special war-time creations, executive acts and re-organisation.

As soon as war becomes imminent and the shadow of the great change darkens the land, a babel of voices proclaiming conflicting desires deafen the ears of government. There is a clash between those responsible for the changes in the first group and those responsible for the changes in the second group.

There are conflicts innumerable between the groups. The Military* point of view demands priority for one matter ; the commercial mind demands it for another. Within the groups the process is repeated. The Naval point of view is one and that of the Army is another ; the Air Force experiences a third ; shipping circles proclaim a fourth, coal mines put forward a fifth, financial experts tell their tale.

It is the business of the Imperial Government to effect a compromise, and the happiness of this compromise will depend entirely on the extent to which the government is able to visualise the Empire as a unit at war whose energies must be gathered together and concentrated towards the winning of the war.

This difficult task is made no easier by the fact that the Imperial Government has first to solve its own problem of looking upon itself as a unit, a fact which involves a compromise between the points of view of the Dominions and Great Britain.

See page xiv.

These far-reaching changes in national life, which are a consequence of the complexity of modern war, are intimately linked with the question of Imperial Defence. The fact that they are necessary means that in time of peace we are always extremely unready for war. This is inevitable. This state of affairs is partially true of all nations, but in no case is it so marked as with ourselves. There is no parallel in the world and there never has been in history, to the situation in which seven separate cabinets* scattered all over the world have first to sanction a declaration of war, with all the tremendous consequences which such an event entails at the present time, and then assume joint responsibility for the conduct of the war. This unsatisfactory state of the relationships between these seven cabinets in time of peace has already been mentioned, and though with our genius for making the unworkable work, we may continue as things are, to muddle along for some years in a tolerable manner, it is certain that something drastic would have to be done if the Empire went to war.

There is no other Power in the world whose economic and military resources are so widely scattered. There is no other Power in the world which has only a few weeks' food supply within its most important territory ; a supply of food which can only be increased from

* There are about one hundred Cabinet Ministers normally advising the Crown in the British Empire.

overseas by being brought to Great Britain in ships normally scattered all over the world.

This chronic unreadiness for war of the British Empire, an unreadiness which is absolutely unavoidable, for it is due to the causes which make us a Great Power in peaceful pursuits, is a factor which demands the most careful consideration on the part of those responsible for Imperial Defence. It is an unreadiness which will increase as civilisation progresses and war becomes more and more complicated and that part of the national war organisation, which it is feasible to maintain in peace, becomes a smaller percentage of the total war force of the Empire.

The tendency will be for the fighting services to become the servo-motor which controls the big machine, not the machine itself, as they were when war was a simple matter between groups of professionals.

This is not to say that the Services will become less important. However big the gun, the trigger and the gunsight retain their significance.

The unreadiness for war of the British Empire must be accepted, but this does not mean that it should not be discounted. We cannot afford, nor do we wish, to dislocate the machinery of peace for the sake of a possible war more than that minimum amount demanded by common prudence, but if we use our imaginations and foresee what will have to be done if war breaks out, we can act as follows :

(a) We can organise the fighting forces we maintain in peace so that they will form a suitably shaped foundation for the great changes which will have to take place if war comes.

(b) We can use our brains; make plans and draw up instructions, so that if the testing time comes, the chaos and confusion inseparable from the great changes will be less than they might be.*

(c) It will often occur in some branch of normal Imperial development that there are several alternatives, each perhaps as attractive as the other from a peace point of view. If we have foreseen the changes which war will bring about, we can select that alternative which will fit in best with these changes, or which is itself easiest to change from a peace to a war basis.

It was suggested on a preceding page that war used to be an art and was now a business. I now wish to qualify this generalisation by pointing out—and here I reach the conclusion to be drawn from this chapter—that business has an art attached to it. It is the art of organisation.

Good organisation, if not the art of modern war, is one of the chief factors of success therein, and as we shall see, it is this question of organisation in peace which underlies many of the most perplexing problems of Imperial Defence.

* This was done during the years immediately preceding the Great War and is the constant task of the Sub-Committees of the C.I.D.

CHAPTER III

THE EMPIRE

I

THE early chapters of a book of this nature are introductory to the subject. The cards are being dealt and gradually the nature of the hand becomes plain. The first chapter described the objects and methods of our foreign policy ; the second was a brief analysis of the characteristics and consequences of modern war ; and this third chapter will describe what the Empire is.

There are many ways of attempting an answer to the question : “ What is this creation of the British peoples the problem of whose defence is our subject ? ” It might be described statistically, that is, an inventory might be made of its body ; it might be described politically ; or, one might describe its cultural influences. One may wander around and among this vast and fascinating subject and there is always something new to see. In this book I propose to describe it from a strategic point of view, and for convenience it will be discussed under the following headings :

1. Geography.
2. Man Power.

3. Raw Materials.

4. Transport and Communications.

Classifications of this nature may be convenient, but they suffer from the disadvantage of possibly giving an impression that these four ways of examining Imperial strategy are independent of each other. Let it be said immediately that no matter from what angle one looks at Imperial strategy, all lines of vision have the common focal point of Imperial Defence.

II

Imperial Geography

Including the mandated territories, the sovereignty of the British Crown extends over territories whose area exceeds thirteen million square miles. This is approximately a quarter of the world's land surface.

The Empire is equally distributed north and south of the Equator and round the world in an east and west direction.

A general geographic survey of the Empire, and for this purpose a globe of the world is invaluable, leaves the impression that its territories can be grouped into seven areas. The suggested arrangement is as follows :

North American Area (Canada and Newfoundland).

European Area (Great Britain and Irish Free State).

British Africa (West, South, Central and East).

Middle East Area (Canal Zone, Palestine, Iraq).

Asiatic Area (India, Burma, Malay States).

Australasian Area (Australia, New Zealand), and
The Isolated Islands.

This classification is vulnerable to detailed criticism, and for a more exact account of Imperial Geography the reader must refer to one of the textbooks devoted to this subject.

If these areas be considered in the aggregate, it will be noticed that the sea is generally their frontier. Actually about 80 per cent. of the total length of the boundaries of the Empire is sea coast, and an observer from another world on being shown a map of our territories might well say: "This arrangement bears the imprint of a seafaring race."

The sea, source of our strength if exploited, of our insecurity if neglected. The sea, that which at once divides and unites the areas of Empire from each other. Though the sea is so often our frontier, the remaining 20 per cent. of the Imperial boundary line can provide examples of every type of frontier used internationally.

Canada has a river and a long artificial line which ignores natural boundaries. The Sudan has a desert, India has mountain ranges as her boundary. Diversity of frontiers entails diversity in methods of defence.

The next point for consideration is the geographical distribution of the areas of Empire relative to each other, and in this matter I am going to be arbitrary, for I am going to talk about the West end of the Empire and the South-East end of the Empire, imagining

myself in Great Britain, which I treat as the centre of the Empire.

Geographically this is a horrible supposition, for it almost implies that the earth is a flat rectangle, but it is justifiable on the same grounds which justify the common conception of the world on a Mercator's projection with the Americas on the left and Japan and Australia on the right. This is how we think of the world, and we think of it in this way because, until very recent times, the Pacific has been a political, historical, and economic void. Very likely we shall think of the world somewhat differently in a few years' time, then we shall centre our maps differently. If from amongst the infinite number of arbitrary geographic arrangements of the Empire, which are all equally permissible, I may be allowed to select that one which fits in best with political and economic facts, I take the North American area as my limit of Empire in one direction and the Australasian area as the limit in the other.

I imagine an axis of Empire, which is in actual fact an all-red line of communication, and I draw it as follows: From Vancouver to Halifax—London—Gibraltar—Malta—the Suez Canal zone—Aden—Colombo—Australia—New Zealand.

At either termini of this line are large empty undeveloped areas of Empire. One* of them, the North

* The Northern territories of Canada are not of any importance at the moment, though a great future may be theirs.

American, is a rectangle 3,000 miles by 300, situated to the north of areas which are full of people and in land connection with these areas, whilst the other (Australasia) are islands south of even more densely populated areas. And, to show that the Pacific has not been forgotten, these two terminal areas of Empire look at each other over their shoulders across six thousand miles of this great ocean. Roughly one quarter of the way between Canada and Australia on this axis of Empire stands Great Britain, the General Head-quarters of the Empire. We shall deal more particularly with its geography in a moment.

British Africa, the Middle East area and the Asiatic area lie along the second axis of Empire, which lies in a South and North-Easterly direction. This axis does not cross the sea. The two axii of Empire cross in the Suez Canal zone. An illustration of this idea is given in diagram I.

The three areas of Empire which are in land connection with each other have two features in common which are of importance from the point of view of Imperial Defence.

The first is that they have each foreign powers adjoining them to the North. China, Afghanistan (with which it is prudent to include Russia), Persia, Turkey and France, such is the list of the Northern neighbours of these areas of Empire. It is worth noting that with the exception of a few well-known vulnerable

spots, the Northern frontiers of these areas of Empire are admirably drawn for purposes of defence. They generally coincide with formidable natural obstacles: deserts and mountains. Nevertheless, a land frontier is a possible source of friction with other powers and the point is aptly illustrated by the fact that at the moment of writing there is some tension between Great Britain (and by inference the whole Empire) and Turkey on account of a section of this Northern boundary in the vicinity of Mosul.

The second important strategic feature, which is common to these three areas of Empire, is that they are each, in varying degree, of the nature of bastions of territory projecting southwards and terminating at the sea.

They may be liable to attack from the North, but they can be reinforced from the South. The strategic significance of this south-projecting peculiarity lies in the fact that it gives the British Empire three salients on the flank of the sea-routes between Europe and Asia. To some extent the Panama Canal has weakened the strength of our position, since American trade from, say, New York, will now go to Asia by the Western route, but the European-Asia routes are unaffected.

Until the Suez Canal was opened, the British African salient in the Southern Hemisphere was of greater importance than it is at present, since sea-communications between Europe and the Far East and Australia

passed by West Africa's front door and round the Cape of Good Hope. But even now West Africa is on the flank of the sea-communications between Europe and South America, whilst should the Suez Canal be blocked, British Africa would at once resume all its importance.

On the other hand, the Suez Canal has increased the strategic importance of India's geographic position.

There is yet to be considered in this geographic outline of Empire that group of territory which I called the isolated islands. Technically speaking, some of the components of this group, such as Gibraltar and Aden, are not islands, but strategically they are. Most of these islands are scattered like star-dust along the trade routes of the world. They are punctuation marks in the history of an Empire that has been built up and thrives on the use it has made of the sea-routes. In one area, the West Indies, these islands cluster in a constellation. Geographically, the West Indies lie within the embrace of the Western and Eastern arms of the United States of America. Thanks to the Panama Canal these two arms may now shake hands.

The isolated islands make a long list. Some of the more important are mentioned below.

Gibraltar	Mauritius	Thursday Island
Malta	Hong-Kong	Falkland Islands
Aden	Cocos Islands	
Ascension	Jamaica	
St. Helena	Bermuda	

One area now remains to be described. The European area which includes Great Britain, the head-quarters of Empire. At the risk of being tedious, the principal geographic features of Great Britain, from a defence point of view, cannot be excluded from a general survey of Imperial geography.

Our island, and the Irish Free State, are outliers from the continent of Europe and stand upon a submarine extension of the mainland known as the Continental Shelf. This area of Empire is surrounded by shallow waters easy to mine in time of war. We have numerous natural harbours, of which the most important is London, which faces the mainland.

The town of Strasburg in the upper Rhine valley is equidistant from the mouth of the Thames, the Gulf of Lyons, the North end of the Adriatic, Vienna and Berlin, and may be considered as near the geographic centre of the most developed part of Europe. A circle with this point as centre and radius 700 miles includes within its circumference the whole of Great Britain south of an East and West line slightly to the North of Edinburgh and Glasgow.

With Brussels as a centre, a circle of 500 miles radius covers the above-mentioned area of Great Britain. The geographic situation of Great Britain places it athwart the sea communications between the Atlantic and Northern Europe and on the Northern flank of the Atlantic-Mediterranean route. Conversely, the sea

communications to the South and South-East of England have Western Europe on their flanks.

The geographical position of the European area of Empire relative to the other areas of Empire is generally speaking, good, and one must not complain in an imperfect world. If we could submerge the Middle East to a thousand fathoms and give the British Isles an alternative anchorage so that the axis of Empire would pass through the Empire's capital city, I do not say that it would be a bad thing to be able to move there on occasion. I should also like another spare anchorage in the vicinity of the Cape Verde Islands.

In concluding this outline of Empire geography, I am conscious of the things left unsaid. The question of the various climates; the nature of our various coastlines; our rivers, are three examples of many matters on which I would have liked to write a few sentences. In deciding what to retain and what to reject, it was considered desirable to retain the minimum necessary in order to give the reader a general impression of those of our geographical features which have most effect on the problems of Imperial Defence.

The Empire will now be regarded from another aspect, that of its man-power. We have dealt with the positions and shapes of our lands, we must now concern ourselves with the men.

III

The Man-Power of the Empire

The total population of the Empire numbers approximately 450 million souls. Of these 450 millions only 67 belong to the white races. Most of these 67 millions are English-speaking and of Anglo-Saxon stock mingled with a Celtic strain. In Canada there is an important community of French origin, numbering $2\frac{1}{2}$ millions, and in South Africa about half the white inhabitants are of Dutch extraction. The 383 million non-white inhabitants of the British Empire include a diversity of tongues, of races, and of cultures unequalled by any other political organisation. One fact will be quoted to open for a moment a subject studded with picturesque and romantic detail, it is that the number of Chinese who are members of the British Empire is about the same as the number of white inhabitants in the Dominion of South Africa.

With the exception of a very few of the 315 million inhabitants of India, it is upon the white population that the Empire must rely for its defence.

It is the whites who exercise most of the power in the Empire at present and they must bear the responsibility.

Since the white British must defend the Empire, their distribution within its territories is important. The following table shows this distribution :

Great Britain	..	..	..	44	million.
Canada	..	..	..	9 $\frac{1}{4}$	„
Australia	..	..	..	5 $\frac{1}{2}$	„
Irish Free State	..	..	..	3 $\frac{1}{4}$	„
Crown Colonies and Dependencies				2	„
Union of South Africa	..	..		1 $\frac{1}{2}$	„
New Zealand	..	..	..	1 $\frac{1}{4}$	„
Newfoundland	..	..	..	$\frac{1}{4}$	„
				<hr/> 67 million.	

Man-power, whether expended in battle or in the service of supply to the fighting front, is a foundation of military operations. The following table compares our man-power with that of some other States :

British Empire	..	..	..	67	million.
U.S.A.	..	..	..	114	„
Russia	..	..	..	134	„
Germany	..	..	..	62	„
Japan	..	..	..	62	„
Italy	..	..	..	40	„
France	..	..	..	39	„
Holland	..	..	..	7	„

If the comparison in the above table be extended to include the possessions to be defended by each Power, it becomes apparent that in view of the enormous stake we hold in the affairs of the world we are at present undermanned from the point of view of defence as compared with all other nations save France and Holland.

France, with her extensive colonial empire and the interests and responsibilities in the world which are inseparable from the status of what is called a "Great Power," is definitely in a serious position ; her stationary birth rate makes her future very gloomy. Fortunately, shortage of quantity can be countered by excellence of quality, and in this respect there are no signs of the British white peoples deteriorating from a standard which is excelled by no other race and equalled by few. But however high may be our opinion of the excellence of our race, it would be stupid to shut our eyes to the fact that great areas of rich territory cannot be developed in peace or defended in war unless adequate man-power is available, and though the practice of birth control has much to recommend it on grounds of personal convenience and of maintaining the quality of the race, it adds a further difficulty to Imperial Defence if it be carried to a high degree of efficiency.

It is evident from the table on page 49 that at the present time Great Britain is our main reservoir of military man-power.

That approximately 61 per cent. of our military man-power should be concentrated in one small area of the Empire is not necessarily a disadvantage from the point of view of defence. Concentration is a military advantage, provided that the area of concentration is safe from attack, that it is well situated relative to the objectives in war, and that rapid and secure communications

can be arranged by which means the concentration of man-power can be moved to the decisive point.

During 1914-18 the decisive point was in France, and it was much to our advantage that the bulk of our man-power was concentrated in Great Britain within 300-400 miles of the Western Front, and not, say, in Canada, 4,000 miles distant therefrom.

It may be that in a future war the present distribution of man-power will not suit the requirements of defence as well as it did in 1914. Since that date Great Britain has become liable to air attack, and its natural security, which gave it a strong recommendation as a concentration area, is now less than it was.

Although at present, and probably for decades to come, the burden of defence is primarily a white people's responsibility, the steady progress which is being made in the grant of self-government to hundreds of thousands of the non-white British will cause the question of what share these races are to take in Imperial Defence to assume increasing importance.

It is a delicate question in peace time, for there are bound up with it deep-rooted racial sentiments. Many of the white inhabitants of the British Empire are not in favour of the indiscriminate use of non-white troops, and the political disadvantages of flouting this opinion would not, in my opinion, be outweighed by the military advantages which might be gained if the coloured

population of the Empire were invited to play a larger part in Imperial Defence.

The French theory, which tends to an increasing degree to base the defence of the French Empire upon coloured troops, is not one which can be recommended to the British Empire. At the same time there can be no objection to a policy which places considerable reliance on coloured troops for local defence, internal security and labour. The distinction between the war effort of a West African or Zulu at a base port and that of a Scotsman or Australian in an aeroplane is negligible from the strictly logical and military point of view, but there is and always will be, a psychological distinction between those who kill and are killed and those whose labours in war are confined to supplying the material for the fighting men.

After geography and population there is the third strategical aspect of the Empire—its raw materials.

IV

Raw Materials

This section, as in the case of its two predecessors on Imperial Geography and Population, must be an attempt to condense into the space of a few pages the salient features of a subject whose details would fill several volumes. Moreover, it is a subject of constant change. New sources of supply are developed; old ones die out. A danger to be avoided in this section

is that of becoming statistical. The statistically inclined may surfeit themselves from Year Books. My purpose now is that of giving a general impression of the state of the economic resources of this Empire whose defence is the problem we are examining.

The first point I desire to emphasise—and it is but another way of stating the conclusion arrived at from the analysis of war in Chapter II—is that if the Empire becomes involved in a large war, though our economic resources are part and parcel of what we should then be defending, they are not passive agents in the war, but they are sinews which give us the strength to be expended in battle. It is because the expenditure of economic resources which takes place in modern war is so lavish that war has become uneconomic. The god has become greater than its service, and though a war may be won, those riches which the war was waged to protect may have vanished in the conflict.

The economic resources of the Empire include far more than a catalogue of raw materials. For example, London is the financial centre of the world, and this fact is of immense importance in modern war. Nevertheless, it is impossible in this chapter to do more than record the existence of a group of economic resources of a financial and political nature which play an important part in modern war. A more evident type of economic resource is that of raw materials vital to the fighting services in the prosecution of the war, or

to the existence of that section of the nation who support the fighting services. Statistics exist which prove that, with the two important exceptions of cotton and petroleum, the Empire could supply all its own needs in food and raw material. In actual practice it does nothing of the sort, since the movements of the great commodities such as the grains, the metals, the meat, timber, wool, nitrates, etc., obey certain economic laws modified in their application by the consequences of artificial influences, such as tariffs. These great commodities do not move in accordance with military requirements, and quite rightly so, for if they did the servant would be master in the house and the source of our prosperity would disappear.

Hence we import about half our iron ore from Spain, though there is plenty of lower grade iron ore in Great Britain and vast supplies in Newfoundland. In the case of wheat, about half of our imported supply comes from foreign countries, chiefly the Argentine and the U.S.A., and half from the Empire.

The movements within the Empire of these great commodities is roughly as follows: The raw materials move to Great Britain, are manufactured or consumed, and the finished articles are then universally distributed. The raw materials come to Great Britain because this island is the industrial head-quarters of the Empire. It has reached this position due to the skill of its people and the fact that when the industrial revolution took

place after the Napoleonic wars, Great Britain was fortunate enough to have coal and iron in close proximity to each other. It is a position which is now being assaulted on all sides, and the competition from the U.S.A. and the continent of Europe will not decrease in intensity, but will be reinforced by that of the Far East.

It is likely that during this century areas of the Empire, such as Canada, South Africa and Australia, will become to some extent industrialised, but for the time being they have twenty or thirty years at least of agricultural development ahead of them, and their industries are not likely to be greater than is necessary to supply their home markets.

For practical purposes of defence, the fact that Great Britain is the industrial base of the Empire is the one to be borne in mind. A second fact to be remembered is that much of the raw materials on which the workers in the base depend for their daily existence, and which the maws of the factories demand for their satisfaction, does not come in peace time from Empire resources.

Thirdly, that owing to the universal state of the Empire, nearly all this essential raw material could, if necessary, be produced from the Empire resources (cotton and petroleum excepted at the present time, 1926).

Fourthly, that the change which would have to take place in the movements of raw materials in order to

make the Empire self-supporting involves a tremendous amount of reorganisation and would take time.

Time—that is the crux of the matter, and one of the great problems of Imperial Defence.

This time interval which would elapse between the cutting off of some normal and foreign source of supply of a vital commodity and the arrival of the commodity from an Empire source must be made as short as possible. This saving of time can be ensured in war by preparing in peace the draft of an economic reorganisation of the Empire which shall begin to come into effect as soon as war breaks out. Meanwhile, though in peace time military requirements must necessarily take third, fourth or even fifth place, they must not be entirely ignored, and in making plans for the economic development of the Empire, weight must also be given to the military importance of being not only self-contained in war, but of drawing the normal supply of vital commodities from the Empire during peace, and thus avoiding the dislocation of a change-over in war.

At the moment of writing our weak spots appear to be the supply of petroleum and cotton, but fortunately there is every prospect that these weaknesses will gradually be eliminated.

V

Transport and Communications

The lands of the Empire, its man-power, its raw material, have each been sketched. These three subjects form as it were the elements of the Imperial Organisation, but without transport and communications, land, man-power and raw materials they are inert. Something is needed to give the organisation life. It must have the means of growth ; channels of movement for matters and ideas. These requirements are met by transport and communications, and it is the fourth and final aspect from which it is proposed to consider the question : “ What is the Empire ? ”

The principal means of transport in the world, so far as we are concerned, is the steamship. In round numbers there are 29,000 steamers afloat, of which we own 10,000.

A cursory study of shipping statistics make it appear that our position in the transport business has deteriorated since 1914, but though we do not cut as fine a figure as we once did in this matter, statistics of tonnage taken by themselves may lead to false conclusions, since they make no allowance for our immense experience in the highly technical business of sea transport. The experiences, costly and painful, of the U.S.A. Shipping Board have shown that the possession of tonnage only wins half the battle.

Diagram No. II shows at a glance the world-wide ramification of British shipping. Since the sea both divides and unites the head-quarters of the British Empire from its scattered components, the vital importance of these ships to the British Empire should be appreciated by every tax-payer.

Moreover, of the 10,000 British ships in existence, over 5,500 are under 1,000 tons and over 4,000 ships are between 1,000 and 5,000 tons. This latter class are the backbone of the business. They are not the vessels with swimming-pools and palm-courts, whose models excite the interest of the passer-by in Trafalgar Square, but they are the ships which do the work that matters most. There are about a quarter-million British men engaged in the seagoing part of this transport business, and it would be difficult to find another quarter-million men in the Empire who are engaged in a more important business.

I doubt if this fact is sufficiently realised.

In time of war the British Mercantile Marine and its appendages, such as dock labourers, shipping offices, fuelling points, docks and wharves and repair yards, without which a ship is almost useless, will be a matter of immense concern to us and our enemies. Many extra loads are thrown upon its broad back. In the first place it has to continue to act as a carrier of raw materials from the Empire to the industrial base in England; secondly, it must carry men and munitions

from all parts of the Empire to ports near the battle fronts ; thirdly, the Royal Navy always expands in ships and men partly at the expense of the Mercantile Marine ; and fourthly, the Mercantile Marine is expected to help to defend itself against enemy attack.

Now the size and movements of the Mercantile Marine in time of peace are governed by economic factors such as freights, and when a war breaks out it is certain that the Mercantile Marine will be too small for its task, and a considerable proportion of it will be in the wrong place, therefore a plan, carefully worked out in peace, for the allocation and control of tonnage in war should be kept ready. As an appendix to this plan there should be a scheme for the expansion of the Mercantile Marine.

Though the Mercantile Marine is the prime mover in the machine of Imperial transport, road and rail transport must not be denied their importance. Naturally enough it is at head-quarters in Great Britain that these systems are in the highest state of development, and it is here that they fill the important rôle of links between ships and the factory.

In time of war the railways and the road transport services share the honour with the Mercantile Marine of being burdened with extra labour, whilst at the same time they are milked of men and material by the Army and Air Force.

Once again, it must be repeated (and this will become

a frequent repetition), the solution to the problems of defence involved in this matter is to be found in creating the necessary organisation during peace for the expansions of war.

The communications of the Empire are by cable, wireless and aircraft, the word communications being here employed as "the act of imparting (esp. news)." *

As the Admiralty cable charts will show, the British were early in the field, or rather on the sea, in the matter of cables, and at present about 70 per cent. of the world's cables are British owned. The experiences of the Great War opened a good many people's eyes to the immense value which accrues in modern war to a country owning cables, or able by the use of sea-power to seize and control cables. The acrimonious proceedings at the Cable Conference of 1921 in Washington were a testimony to the greatly increased importance of cables in war. Space does not permit of an account of the Empire cable system, but, broadly speaking, Great Britain as the head-quarters of the Empire can communicate with any other part of the Empire by cables which do not touch foreign soil.

Contrary to popular belief, wireless is not killing the cable. It may do so one day, but that day is certainly far distant. Wireless has yet to conquer "atmospherics" and has yet to become absolutely secret. At present wireless is supplementary to cables,

* Oxford Dictionary.

and is to be welcomed as a factor in reducing the cost of inter-Imperial communication and affording an alternative method when cables break down or are destroyed by enemy action.

At present an Imperial network of wireless stations using short wave-lengths on the beam system is about to start operations. Progress in radio-telephony is a certainty, but no spoken or cabled word, however efficiently transmitted, can equal in value the personal interview, and as means of establishing communication between two widely separated men by rapidly bringing them face to face, the aircraft is supreme.

We are not at present within measurable distance of the time when aircraft will become a factor of importance as a method of transport of material, except for special freights such as precious metals, but we are apparently on the threshold, if not across the doorstep, of a revolution in the methods of carrying important men and documents across the world.

The importance of a well-organised air-mail for purposes of defence and for the co-ordination of Imperial war effort is very great, and fortunately the needs of peace and military requirements are for once in a way in harmony.

Aircraft in the above instance are not being considered in any way in relation to their uses as weapons of war, but simply as a method of securing that rapid interchange between one part of the Empire and another of

persons and documents which will add so much to the efficiency of our plans for defence in peace and our operations should we have to draw the sword in war.

Summary

In the preceding four sections an attempt has been made to create an impression of what is involved from the defence point of view in the term "The Empire." Four aspects were selected: geography, man-power, raw materials, transport and communications. It may be useful to sum up these impressions.

I think the most impressive characteristic of this Empire, which we may be called upon to defend, is the contrast between the head-quarters in Great Britain and the White Empire overseas. In the one case the congestion of millions of people, in the other the scattered thousands. In Great Britain the forest of factory chimneys; in the Dominions the millions of square miles of open land and unexploited natural resources. Great Britain, politically enmeshed on the one hand with the maze of European politics, on the other linked by a thousand ties of sentiment and self-interest to embryo nations who are beginning to realise that they also must have a foreign policy, and that its cardinal feature may not be European.

These two contrasting realities, this collection of negatives and positives, are equated by the sea-routes, and we call the total expression The Empire.

To defend this heritage, which is as yet but a flower in bud, there are 66 million white men and women. Imperial resources exist beyond computation in quantity but not normally available for defence. It is but common prudence to make use of forethought and draw up a comprehensive Imperial plan of defence during peace, for even if it be but a skeleton of a plan, provided it is a complete skeleton, this will be better than a collection of mummified and unrelated anatomical exhibits.

CHAPTER IV

POSSIBLE WARS

EVERY defence plan must presume the possibility of certain definite wars. This may not sound very genteel, but it is a fact. The ostrich-like attitude of hiding one's head in the sand of unreality by pretending that war can only be discussed in the general, seems to me to be on a par with putting lace round the naked legs of arm-chairs.

Let us consider a concrete example, which though a possible war, is an extremely unlikely one. This is the case of war between the U.S.A. and the Empire. Everyone who is not a lunatic ought to realise that such an event would be a catastrophe from which the present state of man's civilisation might never recover, but man is a notorious fool, and it may correct one's perspective to bear in mind that as recently as 1861-65 the inhabitants of the United States of America were locked in the throes of a civil war of extreme bitterness. Who will say that because a British-American war is an event for whose avoidance it is almost impossible to pay too high a price, that the thing is impossible?

Not the present writer.

In fact I have no hesitation in saying that this disaster

is more likely to occur than is a British-Swiss war, and therefore, in considering plans for defence, the possibility of the U.S.A. being an enemy should take precedence over the possibility of the Swiss occupying that rôle.

All armaments are maintained, as their respective owners continually proclaim, for purposes of defending national interests. Since no State ever announces that it maintains its armed forces for aggression, there can in theory never be an aggressor, nor should war ever break out, but in practice the term "national interests" is of an elastic nature, and one nation's meat often seems poison to another. In peace time it is necessary to gauge what interpretation each nation gives to the expression "national interests," and then consider whether what we consider to be our own national interests conflict with this interpretation.

A nation's foreign policy is the mirror in which its conception of its national interests are reflected, and hence the study of foreign affairs is a very important branch of national defence.

History records that from time to time two national foreign policies are so patently in conflict that it is easy for the Government in either case to say "So-and-so is the Power with whom we are most likely to have a war if war there is to be." From 1895 onwards Russia and Japan in the Far East were obviously drifting into war, and there was certainly no doubt in the minds of the Japanese Government as to which Power was their

potential enemy. Incidentally there are many signs that this Russo-Japanese conflict in the Far East is reviving. Similarly, between 1906-1914, though informed opinion in England was in sharp disagreement as to the likelihood of war, there was agreement that, if war came, Germany was likely to be our enemy.

When an obviously potential enemy exists, what is popularly known as a "Menace," the task of Imperial Defence is much simplified. There is no particular temptation to commit that heinous strategical aim of trying to be strong everywhere. The energies available in peace time for defence can be concentrated on one object, that of protection against the Menace.

But history also records that there are periods during which no particular potential enemy fills the horizon of foreign politics. This state of affairs usually exists as the aftermath of great wars, when policies are in the melting pot and governments are sizing up new conditions. Though this situation is generally considered favourable to peace and commonly produces a reaction against defence measures, it is a regrettable fact that history supplies no warrant for supposing that during these periods of calm we are much less liable to be suddenly faced with war than we are when a menace exists.

In fact a case could be made out in support of the argument that the existence of a generally recognised menace, by keeping the possibility of war in the open

and under discussion, may prove an incentive to the making of international agreements which tend to reduce the chances of war.

This is a very arguable point and some further light will be shed upon it in the chapter on Disarmament, but whatever the truth may be, it is certain that if the matter be looked upon solely from the point of view of Imperial Defence these phases of international calm add much to the difficulties of the problems we are considering.

At the present time we are in one of these calm periods. We may remain in it for many years, or we may be on the verge of leaving it. The present trend of several foreign policies is obscure and it is safer not to speculate more than is inevitable. Whether the League of Nations will develop into an instrument dominant in the world on the side of peace is a great mystery hidden in the womb of time. For the moment we can only do our best to help the League, whilst at the same time recognising how far we still have to go before its ideals can be attained.

Post-war foreign policies are crystallising, but their form is obscure, and at the moment of writing there is no particular State against which it is prudent for us to make defence arrangements. Were I discussing the defence problems of France, Greece, Italy or Turkey, to quote one list which has explosive possibilities, or Russia, China and Japan, to quote another, it would

be necessary to write more definitely on the subject of the particular orientation which defence should be given.

Since, however, it would be an extravagant madness to have defence arrangements at all unless we assume that we are liable to be menaced or attacked by some nation or nations in some particular manner, we must have some method of classifying our potential enemies in order to establish a foundation on which to base plans for defence. Failing an obvious menace, we can assume that at the present time all States are imbued with the kindest of feelings towards us and a profound belief in the purity of our foreign policy.

We can presume, in fact, that other people see us as we see ourselves.

We can further assume that each of these foreign Powers is liable to change its good opinion of us and suddenly or gradually discover that we are a menace to its national interests. A menace which may become sufficiently grave to cause war. With these suppositions in mind we can then draw up a list of States who are capable, in certain circumstances, of going to war with us with reasonable hopes of achieving their object. Some have strength in man-power, some in natural resources, some are geographically well placed, others are strong in all these factors. Before setting down this list, it should be noted that some of the Powers therein do not at present dispose of sufficient strength to make it likely that they would contemplate

what strategists call an unlimited war against us, but it is possible to conceive circumstances in which these Powers might consider it essential to embark on a war with limited objects. For example, Turkey stated that she did not recognise the Northern frontier of Iraq as drawn by the League of Nations in 1926, and this was a possible source of war. It would have been a limited war. Turkey would not have directly menaced the existence of the British Empire.

The list of nations who possess a reasonable capacity for war against us is as follows. Please note it has been arranged in alphabetical order.

Afghanistan

France

Italy

Japan

Russia

Turkey

U.S.A.

There are two omissions from this list which call for remark. One is Germany, the other China. Germany lies at present under the shadow of defeat, but it will be contrary to all the teachings of history if this eclipse is of more than a temporary nature. China is still in the throes of a new birth, but it is not unlikely that in thirty years' time she will occupy a prominent place in the list.

If the list be pondered it will be realised that France,

Italy, Japan and the U.S.A. can each, with varying hopes of success, wage unlimited war against us, whilst Afghanistan, Russia and Turkey, though able to deal us some shrewd blows, cannot in a military sense endanger the whole existence of the Empire.

Further consideration of these two groups of Powers leads us to the conclusion that the possible wars in which we might become involved fall into three categories.

Firstly, a war in which

(i) Great Britain as the Head-quarters of Empire is liable to direct attack.

(ii) The sea communications which concentrate on Great Britain are liable to attack.

(iii) The various overseas areas would be liable to local attack.

Our potential enemies in this kind of war are France and Italy, though until the useful range of aircraft is increased to 2,000 miles, Italy is not in a position to make a direct attack on Great Britain.

Secondly, a world-wide war with the same characteristics as the first-mentioned type of war, save that Great Britain would not be liable to direct attack.

The U.S.A. and Japan are capable of waging this type of war against us, though the danger to our sea communications near Great Britain would be slight should Japan be our enemy.

Lastly, there is a type of war in which neither Great

Britain nor the sea communications are liable to attack which is confined to certain areas of Empire. Enemies in this kind of war might be Russia, Turkey or Afghanistan.

Since it has been assumed that no one Power amongst those mentioned in the list is at the present time to be considered more menacing to us than any other, we must base our defence plans on the possibility of any of these three kinds of wars taking place. Fortunately this is not so complicated as it sounds, since to some extent the greater includes the less until we get down to details, and in many cases a defensive measure which is required for the first type of war will also be useful in the other two kinds of war. However, this ruling must be treated with caution since, though the U.S.A. has been described as a possible enemy in the second type of war and Italy one in the first type, it would obviously be a more serious matter to find ourselves at war with the U.S.A. than with Italy.

There is a distinction between the first and second types of war which should be noted. In the first type the head-quarters of our Empire is liable to attack and in the second type it is not. The same remarks apply to the head-quarters of our possible enemies in these wars. A successful stroke upon the head-quarters of a Power is likely to produce a decision, and therefore it is probable that the general policy of this type of war would be different from that of the second type

in which the respective head-quarters of the belligerents would be free from attack. In the first type of war both sides would aim at the knock-out blow; in the second type of war this would be very difficult if not impossible to secure, and the war might be indecisive and exhausting.

With these types of possible wars in mind, the requirements of defence can be stated.

They are :

- (1) Defence of Great Britain against direct attack across the sea or by air.
- (2) Defence of sea communications.
- (3) Local defence of areas of Empire.

These requirements make conflicting demands upon the nation both in peace and war, and it is a delicate task to decide what methods are to be adopted in fulfilment of these demands, and even when this decision has been made, there arises the further problem of how much of the national defence effort is to be devoted to each of the selected methods. The guiding principle must be that for so long as the period of international calm exists, flexibility should be one of the chief characteristics of Imperial Defence. The methods adopted to fulfil defence requirements should be kept free from special influences. The enthusiastic expert in one method is liable to be a danger if he gets executive power during periods such as we are now considering. Similarly, it is most important that during these calm

periods the amount of national energy available for defence be spread in reasonable proportion amongst all the available methods. If this policy is followed, then when the period of calm comes to an end and a particular Power becomes a menace in one or more definite ways, then the defence measures having been kept flexible can easily be intensively developed in the manner best suited to counter the menace.

The moment when this intensive development should take place and the direction in which this development should proceed are matters which depend upon an intelligent interpretation of foreign policies. It should be the business of those responsible for defence to be constantly studying the international situation. The matter is comparable to meteorology, in which the Foreign Office is the meteorological bureau which should supply the Defence Departments with international weather charts from which forecasts can be made.

There is a certain tendency amongst people, be they journalists, ambassadors or Foreign Secretaries, whose business it is to deal in foreign affairs to pretend that there is a mystery in their speciality.

This is a tendency similar to and as harmful as that sometimes displayed by professionals in the business of defence. Anything is understandable provided it be intelligently explained.

CHAPTER V

THE EMPLOYMENT OF THE FIGHTING FORCES

I

AT the beginning of a war the principal forces at the instant disposal of the Empire are the Navy, the Army, and the Air Force. Though details will be avoided, a few general facts concerning the Services are an indispensable preliminary to a study of the subject of this chapter.

It is to be expected that in the first instance, the brunt of Imperial Defence will be borne almost exclusively by the fighting services which are recruited in and maintained by Great Britain, for the fighting services of the Dominions are not—with the notable exception of the Australian and New Zealand naval forces—maintained in peace time on the basis of readiness for universal service. They are principally for home defence.

Of the three fighting services of Great Britain, the longest established is the Royal Navy. It has existed as a national defence service for approximately five hundred years, and its history is interwoven with that of the Empire. The Royal Navy occupies a unique position in the hearts of the British people, a position which is the result of a mixture of emotions. The

British love their Navy because it is the symbol of sea-power, and they have a deep-rooted instinct, founded on centuries of historical experience, that sea-power is vital to their continued existence as an independent people. The British are inclined to take their Navy on trust and surround it with a veil of mystery. In these present times this attitude of mind is not good for either the Navy or the British people.

The Royal Navy is manned by ordinary human beings no more and no less fallible than their fellows. The days have gone when the naval officer or man lived a peculiar life so different from the rest of society that naval people were a race and a law unto themselves. But the tradition of the strangeness and uniqueness of naval life persists to some extent, and it should be stamped out, for it is obsolete.

It is good for the Navy to be criticised, provided the criticism is intelligent. The criticism can only be intelligent if the public critics take the trouble to inform themselves on naval affairs. The Navy should welcome and foster interest in its activities, and should steadfastly combat the tradition that it is a mystery. Much has been done of late in this direction, but there is still considerable room for improvement in linking the Navy closer to the people who pay for it and whose defence is its *raison d'être*. The fact that from time to time well-known public men and newspapers denounce the activities of a mysterious and actually non-existent

group of people called "The Admirals," is proof that there is still misunderstanding between the Navy and the people. This kind of misapprehension is widespread abroad, and very recently I found it impossible to convince a prominent Frenchman that there did not exist in England a "Naval Party" consisting of Admirals and politicians in unholy alliance against governments of every complexion. "We in France," said he, "have our military party, so had the Germans and so have the Spaniards. With you it is a naval group who pulls the strings."

I have touched on the existence of a certain detachment between the Navy and the people because I think it is distinctly more marked in the case of the Navy than in that of the Army or Air Force. The Army, though more in touch with civilian life and thought than the Navy, does not occupy quite the same privileged position in British minds as does the Navy.

The inhabitants of Great Britain have a political mistrust of standing armies, and they are exceedingly jealous of any supposed attempt on the part of the Army to interfere in matters outside the military province. The existence of the Army is solemnly prolonged from year to year by Parliament.

The Air Force is only eight years old, and public opinion has not yet had time to make up its mind about it. As is very right and proper from an Air

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Force point of view, this Service is advertised more than its sister services.

Advertisement is a word which has come down in the world in the meaning conveyed by it to men's minds, but which is exercising an ever-increasing influence on men's actions.

I have heard it said that the Air Force advertises too much and the Navy too little. On this I comment that what is required is not a comparison of the separate advertising efforts of the Services, but a joint effort on the part of all the Services with the object of ensuring that matters relating to defence are given adequate attention by public opinion.

Of all the three Services the Navy is in the highest degree of war-readiness. Owing to the fact that naval war has not escaped the universal twentieth century craze of complexity which mankind calls progress, the actual war-readiness of the Navy to-day is not high. But in these matters it is the blessed word relativity which is of importance, and there are many grounds on which to base the assertion that the British Navy is as ready and probably readier for war to-morrow than are any other of the world's navies.

By the terms of the Washington Agreement the strength of the British Navy in capital ships is equal to that of the U.S.A. But this comparison is not of great value, since fighting strength is not a factor to be measured in terms of soulless material. Moreover,

the Washington Agreement does not cover auxiliary craft, save setting limits to the tonnage of aircraft carriers and cruisers, so that all maritime Powers are busy building cruisers within the limit of 10,000 tons per ship.

It would be easy to cover pages with comparative statistics for various countries which would show ages, gun-powers, speeds, tonnage, etc., of various classes of ships. These statistics would mean very little to a naval officer if he were weighing up relative naval strengths, and though they would mean perhaps a lot to a civilian reader, it is almost certain they would give him a wrong impression.

At the present time the Empire has two up-to-date battle fleets in existence. In war they would probably amalgamate. One is stationed in Home waters and the other in the Mediterranean. Neglecting a few isolated cruisers and small craft, we have a cruiser squadron in the Indian Ocean, another in the Far East, and a third in the West Indies. These forces compose the Navy which is more or less ready for war. In addition to this active Navy we have a dwindling reserve of ships in Home waters.

The peace-time disposition of the Navy is partly conditioned by the political situation and partly by the question of naval bases.

We could, if necessary, base cruiser squadrons on the West Coast of the Pacific and in the South Atlantic,

but at the moment lack of bases capable of dealing with large ships limit us to two alternatives so far as the main battle fleets are concerned. One possibility is to base all the heavy ships on England; the other is to base about two-thirds of them on Malta and one-third at Home.

Passing from the Navy to the Army we find the latter Service still in a state of reorganisation consequent upon its enormous expansion between 1914-18 and its subsequent rapid deflation. In broad outline the Army consists of a mobile striking force of four divisions concentrated in England. At present these four divisions are not so ready for immediate action overseas as were the six divisions of the Expeditionary Force in 1914. The readiness for war of the four divisions is being gradually increased. There are in India about seventy thousand British troops. Behind the expeditionary force there are the regular reserves and fourteen Territorial divisions which are, in an emergency, liable for service abroad. They are considerably less ready for active service than the four regular divisions.

The Royal Air Force is at present in the unique position amongst the three Services of being the one which is undergoing expansion. The scheme of expansion has been slowed down and the position at present is as follows :

In 1923 the Government decided to increase the Home Defence Force to 52 squadrons, of which 39

would be regular Air Force. This programme was to be completed by 1928. For the sake of economy it has now been decided that the rate of expansion shall be adjusted so that the programme is complete by 1930.

At present [1926] the strength and disposition of the Air Force is approximately as follows :

Locality.	Regular.	Auxiliary and Special Reserve Squadrons.
Home ..	27 Squadrons, 1 Flight.	5
Iraq	8 Squadrons ..	—
India	6 Squadrons ..	—
Middle East .	4 Squadrons ..	—
Aden	1 Flight ..	—

Fleet Air Arm : 9 Squadrons in 18 Flights.

The main concerns of the Royal Air Force at present are the defence of Great Britain, co-operative work with the Army and Navy, and local defence in the Middle East.

There is not at present an air-striking force specifically organised for universal use. The largest concentration of aircraft outside Great Britain is in Iraq, where the Air Force is the garrison of the country.

II

A meagre outline of the three fighting Services has been set down. These Services are the first line of

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our defence, and it is with their disposition and strength in peace and initial employment in war that Imperial Strategy is concerned.

But before describing the manner in which these services jointly and severally carry out their tasks, it is well to consider the word "Defence." It is a word of many interpretations and it is important to be clear as to which of these meanings must be rejected from our minds.

It most certainly must not be allowed to mean an attitude of passivity in which we wait to be assaulted. Political considerations, which must always override military requirements, may make it necessary for us to wait to be hit first, but in that event the counter-blow should instantly flash back. To employ a convenient expression used in tables of official precedence, our counter-blow in such a case should be "with but after" the enemy attack.

Once war has been declared the offensive spirit must kindle the imaginations of those responsible for the direction of the war. Battles and wars are lost and won in the hearts of men.

For simplicity of argument, the employment of each service will be discussed in turn, but this surrender to literary convenience must not be allowed to obscure the fact that though the services sometimes work independently in detail, they often operate together and they are always directing their energies towards

the common object of defending the Empire by forcing its enemies to accept peace on our terms.

III

Naval Operations

It is the business of the Navy in war to so operate that a situation is created in which we ARE able and our enemy is NOT able to use the sea for transport purposes.

I put that sentence down as not necessarily the best and certainly not the only way of defining in a few words the root object of naval operations. It is suggested that it is an acceptable statement.

The idea expressed by the definition quoted above is sometimes described as "the control of sea-communications" or "command of the sea." My personal objection to these two phrases, which are mentioned here because the reader is likely to encounter them elsewhere, is that it is not "the sea-communications" (whatever the exact definition of a sea-communication may be), and certainly not "the sea" which we want to control or command in war, but the material which moves upon it.

The above may seem hair-splitting, but it is an historical fact that disastrous strategical mistakes have been made in war because the essential act of clear and simple thinking was neglected when plans were first conceived. Further consideration of the definition

submitted at the head of this section suggests two questions :

I. What is the value to the British Empire of creating the situation ?

II. How does the Navy operate in order to create the situation ?

These questions have instructive answers.

The situation mentioned above has a double value to the Empire. It is valuable to us because the nature of the Empire is such that without sea-transport it withers away. If sea-transport is necessary to us in peace it is vital to us in war. We depend upon sea-transport in peace and war for the victualling of the thickly populated head-quarters of Empire and for our economic strength. In war we depend upon it for the concentration of our man-power and their equipment. When our armies are ready for battle we depend upon sea-transport in order to move those armies to the decisive point wherever that may be in the world ; we depend upon it for their maintenance once they are committed to operations or for their evacuation should the operations become profitless.

Without a certain amount of sea-transport, which becomes calculable in terms of ships and tonnage for any given war, the Empire is comparable to a decapitated head and a dismembered body.

This is the first value of sea-transport to the Empire,

it is the value represented by having the *ability* to use sea-transport. The second value arises from the *disability* of the enemy to use sea-transport. This value necessarily depends upon the nature of our enemy. At the present time there would be very little value obtained by preventing Russia from using sea-transport, whereas Japan being an island Power would be seriously incommoded in war by a stoppage of her sea-transport.

We are unique in our dependence upon sea-transport. It is in order to insure against the disaster which would speedily overtake us in war with a maritime Power if our sea-transport fell below a certain standard that we pay for naval forces in peace. Normally, then, sea-power is a means to an end. It defends us by guarding the most valuable part of the Imperial system. It is a mobile shield behind which we can gather together our forces, train them, dispatch them swiftly and secretly to attack weak spots in the enemy organisation, then maintain and supply them from all parts of the Empire. It is also a force which any enemy must defeat before he can cross the sea to invade the head-quarters of Empire. Besides these protective duties, sea-power also puts pressure on the enemy by forbidding him the use of sea-transport.

We can now consider the second question which arose from the definition of the Navy's business. This question asked how the Navy operated in order to

bring about a situation in which we were able and the enemy was not able to use sea-transport.

I think the simplest way of getting to the bottom of this question is to consider a typical case, starting with the period immediately preceding the outbreak of war.

At this time the sea-routes are free to all. Suppose war to be declared between a maritime power X.Y.Z. and the British Empire. Immediately this event takes place, British and X.Y.Z. armed ships proceed to sea bent on attacking the enemy shipping and ensuring the safety of their own. A menace to British sea-transport is a menace to our existence and it becomes imperative to give our shipping immediate security. We also want to prevent enemy shipping using the sea.

The menace to our shipping, and conversely such security as the enemy shipping may feel that it enjoys, are sentiments founded on the existence of enemy NAVAL FORCES. If these ENEMY NAVAL FORCES are destroyed the menace will vanish and so will the security of enemy shipping.

Therefore the destruction of the ENEMY NAVAL FORCES becomes the principal object of the operations of the British Navy. This destruction of enemy naval forces is the ideal.

It sounds simple and it is simple, but the fact remains that this ideal has not always been pursued with that single-minded determination which alone leads to the attainment of ideals. The issue has often become

clouded because the ideal is usually hard to attain. Most ideals have this characteristic.

Why this issue has become clouded in the past will become apparent as we consider some of the methods available in sea-warfare for the destruction of enemy naval forces.

Naval forces have some peculiar characteristics. They are dependent upon the land in that they need a base to which they can retire for fuel, provisions, munitions, and refits. Naval forces, and I write of the general case, cannot attack each other in their bases. They are designed to fight each other at sea and not to fight forts. Naval forces can be concentrated into a very small area. The Grand Fleet, the axle of the Allied Wheel in the Great War, could be concentrated into an area of a few square miles.

They are self-contained except for their periodic need of a base, and they move about very quickly—400 miles a day is an ordinary figure.

Consequently, they can concentrate, disperse, and re-concentrate with great rapidity.

They operate in very large areas of sea, and the rapidity of their movements and the trackless nature of the oceans make it possible for rival naval forces to operate for a long time without meeting each other. Even when each of two concentrations of naval force know—as each often does—exactly where its rival is based, months may elapse without the two forces

coinciding at sea. Wireless telegraphy and air-reconnaissance have been influences to compromise the blind man's buff of sea-warfare, but the application of the power of submersion to warships is an influence in a counter-direction.

It is a consequence of these characteristics of naval forces that in sea-warfare quick decisions are rare. It is almost certain that one Power is more anxious to come to a decision on the sea than is the other, and the circumstances of sea-warfare are such that the Power which desires to remain on the defensive has no great difficulty in doing so.

It has always been in the past and it still is much to our advantage to force a decision at sea. Conversely, it has often appeared to our enemies that it would be sound strategy to deny us this decision.

Broadly stated, foreign naval strategy has often been based on the following thoughts :

“ These British depend absolutely on sea-transport which is protected by a powerful fleet. We will only fight that fleet if we can meet it under conditions very favourable to ourselves. Meanwhile we will evade their fleet and attack their sea-transport with cruisers. If we can put enough pressure on them we may persuade them to throw away their fleet in some death or glory operation in the vicinity of the bases from which our cruisers may emerge.”

So far there has been no occasion in the history of our Empire in which this line of reasoning has led to victory, although in 1917 the Germans were within measurable distance of success.

But although this Continental type of naval strategy has never yet produced the big result of bringing the British Empire to ruin, it has, and presumably can still, produce results which require careful attention on our part.

Unless we are certain that in the first week of a war with a maritime power we can achieve our ideal of destroying his enemy forces, we must divide our naval operations into two departments. Operations linked together, be it understood, by the desirability of destroying the enemy naval forces and the ultimate object of contributing in every possible manner to the political object of the war, yet distinctly different in details. On the one hand we must set aside a concentration of naval force at least as powerful as the strongest concentration by the enemy. This will probably be a Battle Fleet. On the other hand we must set aside certain forces to deal with the enemy forces which may be able to operate upon the oceans against our sea-transport. The Battle Fleet has the function—if it has the chance—of destroying the enemy concentration. The enemy may wish to deny it this chance. In such a case the British Battle Fleet must endeavour to get into such a position that the enemy battle fleet

cannot come to sea without running the risk of destruction.

Meanwhile it is to be expected that enemy cruisers, either surface or submarine type, have got out into the oceans. Their activities cannot be neglected. They must be hunted down. This is the rôle of the British naval forces which are not with our Battle Fleet.

To summarise. British naval operations may be expected to fall into two main categories. The operations in each category will have to be carried out concurrently. These groups are as follows :

(A) Operations by a British concentration against an enemy concentration, with the object of destroying that concentration.

(B) Local operations all over the world, with the object of giving security to our sea-transport pending a successful issue to the operations mentioned in category A.

It is not possible in an outline study of Imperial Defence to describe in any detail the nature of these two branches of naval operations, nor would such a course be desirable, for important though they are, they are only a part of a whole. I will limit myself to some general observations which will give an idea of what the Navy will have to do in war.

The scope of the first class of operations will much depend on the composition of the enemy main naval concentration. At the present time the standard type

of naval concentration maintained by maritime powers is the Battle Fleet. A certain amount of misunderstanding is current as to what a battle fleet actually is. Many people think that it is a collection of battleships. It is something far more expensive and complicated than that. A battle fleet is an organisation with a core of battleships which is surrounded by a horde of auxiliary vessels such as cruisers, air-craft carriers, submarines, mine-layers, destroyers, and supply ships. The expense and elaborations of a battle fleet do not end with the ships which compose it, for a well-equipped base is an essential to its efficiency.

Before the late war a number of countries maintained battle fleets of consequence, but at the present time only three modern battle fleets exist in the world. They are those of the British Empire, the U.S.A. and Japan.

There are two second class battle fleets in existence, those of Italy and France.

The first business of the British battle fleet will be to discover the location of the enemy battle fleet and if possible bring that fleet to action. If the enemy chooses to remain in a fortified base, the British fleet must establish itself in a base within striking distance of the enemy fleet and then keep the enemy fleet under observation, so that if it does come out it may be brought to action.

Meanwhile, we will imagine our battle fleet cruising

at sea or waiting in its war-base for an opportunity to destroy the enemy fleet, and turn our attention to the activities of the ships which are engaged on the second class of naval operations.

These ships are dispersed and carry out many duties. They search for enemy raiders ; they escort convoys of sea-transport ; they patrol important areas. Allied to this local protection of sea-transport are a host of other naval activities, such as routeing of ships ; organisation of salvage services ; camouflage of ships ; establishments of ports of refuge ; small combined operations of all services in order to capture bases used by enemy cruisers ; the provision of guns and gun crews to merchant shipping ; maintenance of a world wide intelligence organisation ; examination services, etc., etc., etc.

Finally, I would point out the interdependence of the two classes of naval operations.

Many of the ships used for the second class of operations which provide local security to sea-transport are weak and would be easily destroyed if the enemy main fleet could burst in upon them. The security of these weak vessels depends on the fact that the British Battle Fleet is operating in such a manner that the enemy fleet must accept battle before it can get at our weak vessels.

It is possible that if the enemy is much dependent on sea-transport, the activities of our weak vessels may provoke his main fleet into coming to sea.

It will easily be realised that the second class of naval operations require a great many ships, and this causes a conflict to arise between the requirements of the battle fleet and the requirements of the local operations.

Between August, 1914, and April, 1915, there were about twelve German cruisers and auxiliaries at sea. These enemy ships were unprovided with regular bases yet they kept about fifty allied cruisers and old battle-ships busy looking for them.

In cases of doubt the battle fleet must be given priority.

IV

The Army

Subject to certain qualifications of uncertain value due to the recent introduction into war of air-power, it is usually the business of the Army to be the principal means of putting pressure on the enemy nation.

If the enemy depends to a considerable extent upon sea-transport, a proportionate amount of pressure can be put upon him by the exclusive use of sea-power, but the British Empire is probably the only political organisation now in existence which could certainly be defeated by sea-power. With the doubtful exception of Japan (in ten years' time it may not be doubtful) none of the nations mentioned in the list on page 69 can be defeated within a reasonable period by the sole

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use of sea-power. Moreover, sea-power suffers from important psychological disadvantage. It is expressed at a distance from the enemy. The enemy civil population do not see our Navy in action, they only feel the results of its operations. Compare this with the psychological effect of an army of occupation.

In order to achieve a decision against a nation which is not absolutely dependent upon sea-transport for its existence, it is necessary to convince the enemy people that further resistance is useless. A potent way of producing this conviction in the minds of the enemy is by occupying his territory, but this occupation must be accompanied by circumstances in which the enemy realises that the only way of getting rid of the army of occupation is to make peace. For so long as the enemy has a field army in existence he has the hope of driving out the invaders, therefore the destruction of the enemy's armies is the first business of our Army.

Until the defeat of the enemy armies has been achieved, the occupation of enemy territory is of secondary importance.

It is in its possession of the ability to occupy, and, if necessary, administer enemy territory that the Army differs fundamentally from the Navy, and still to a large extent, from the Air Force. It can strike and hold what it has gained. Our Army can defeat the enemy army, and then sit in enemy territory or

in a position from which it can freely move into enemy territory, and it can remain thus indefinitely, provided its sea and land communications are secure. It squats there, a living example of the consequences of defeat; an humiliation; an incubus; an agent of British Government.

Our Army of a few regular divisions is negligible in comparison with the armies of States who rely upon land forces as their principal means of defence. At the outbreak of war we can do nothing on a large scale with our Army unless we are in alliance with a State which has a large army, but as the war proceeds our impotence against land powers disappears. Our Army expands, both through the Territorial divisions at home and the growth of the Dominion Armies, until perhaps a year after the outbreak of war the British Empire would have fifty divisions ready for universal service, with others still in process of formation and training. Obviously, this expansion is a tremendous business depending for its success upon adequate sea-transport and freedom from enemy influence. It is the business of the Navy to ensure that this army expansion is not interfered with so far as enemy action by sea is concerned. The geography of the Empire makes it impossible for any land power, however powerful, to interfere with this army growth by a land attack except in two areas of Empire. Russia might conquer India and by so doing effectually subtract India's energies from the growth

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of British land power, but Canada, New Zealand, Australia, British Africa, and Great Britain would continue to form divisions and manufacture their supplies. The U.S.A. might conquer Canada.

When the British land force is ready, it will have to be concentrated in one or more areas of Empire adjacent to the objective which has been selected for the army operations. This area may be Canada for a North American war, or Great Britain for a European war, or Australia or India for an Asiatic war, or the Middle East for other wars. In every case sea-transport is needed and it is the business of the Navy to see that, even as the divisions grew to maturity under the shelter of naval strength, the finished articles, helpless as they are at sea, are brought in security to the jumping-off place.

The divisions have been assembled, and the next process is to strike with them at the selected objective, an objective which is either the enemy's main army or something which the enemy will have to defend with his army.

The British Army may land on enemy territory straight from the sea, and, fighting the enemy army on his coast, so begin the most complicated form of combined operation, or it may march to give battle to the enemy army. In either case and however far from the sea the divisions may wander in their task, it is upon sea-transport that they depend for their supply of men and

munitions. Viewed from afar off, the operations of the British Army are always combined operations.

One may summarise the purposes and activities of the Army in the following terms. Its ultimate object is that of bringing pressure to bear on the civilian population of the enemy. A common method of achieving this object is by occupying and threatening to occupy enemy territory for an indefinite period. This occupation and threat is of little value until the enemy army is beaten in battle, therefore the defeat of the enemy army becomes the immediate object of the British Army. Normally, the British Army is too small to operate by itself, consequently it must first expand. This expansion takes place beneath the shelter of sea-power. When the Army has grown sufficiently strong it depends upon sea-transport for its further operations.

v

The Air Force

The first particular characteristic of the Air Force is that of the manner in which it co-operates with the other Services. Generally speaking, the Army and the Navy only co-operate in a detailed manner, or "tactically" as the jargon has it, on special occasions. It is rare for the Army to participate in naval operations, although extreme cases have occurred, and as recently as 1914, in which soldiers formed part of a man-of-war's crew, and in several parts of the world the Army seized

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naval bases for the purpose of assisting naval operations. It is less rare for the Navy to co-operate tactically with the Army. The naval operations off the Belgian coast and at Gallipoli are well-known examples in the last war.

From a broad point of view, that is to say strategically, the Army and Navy are always co-operating, since their activities have the common purpose of winning the war. The Air Force likewise co-operates broadly with the other two Services, but it also has the peculiar characteristic of always co-operating with them in detail or "tactically."

Nowadays, aircraft are absolutely essential to all naval or land operations. This need of aircraft is beyond dispute, as is also the fact that a different type of aircraft is required for each kind of tactical co-operation.

It is when one examines the broader type of strategic co-operation between the Air Force and the other two Services that one handles a problem around which controversy is likely to centre until another war supplies an undeniable solution.

It is a controversy which is closely linked with the subject of this book, and the right solution of the problems involved have not been made any easier by the passionate manner in which they have been argued by experts on either side.

Reduced to its simplest form the issue becomes the following question :

Can air action operating independently win a war ?

This question is no sooner posed than it produces another, i.e. Can air action operate independently ?

There is no doubt that the answer to this is in the negative. The instruments of air action, which are men, machines and munitions, must have a base, and at present this base cannot be seized, or if already in existence, cannot be given security and kept supplied without using land and sea power.

Returning to the original question in which we must now exclude the provision of air force bases from the province of independent air action, and this is an important exclusion, we can say this :

Winning the war means overcoming the national resolution of the enemy. If the enemy nation is within range of our concentrated air force and if he has no air force, it is reasonable to suppose that we have now reached a state in the development of air warfare in which we could make aerial bombardment so intolerable to the enemy that he would sue for peace. This statement includes two suppositions which much reduce the value of its practical application.

A glance at the list on page 69 shows that only one country is partially within range of a possible concentration of British aircraft. Secondly, all countries maintain air forces and corresponding ground defences of certain strengths. It does not appear therefore that

independent air action can at present win any war in which we are likely to be involved.

It may be argued that the supposition that our enemy must have no air force is unfair since if our air force had a 2 to 1 superiority we might hope to reach the 1 to 0 situation. But this would take time and it must be assumed that our enemy would be doing something with his naval and land forces during this period and that if we have a 2 to 1 superiority in the air, we have sacrificed strength elsewhere.

Another complication in the problem is that no one can do more than speculate as to what effect intense air attack is going to have on the *morale* of a civilian population. One can only note that up to the present mankind has shown no disposition to shrink from the application to others or the infliction on himself of any weapon of war which he has created, provided the issues at stake appear to him to be of sufficient importance. The uncertainty which hangs around all questions connected with the effect of air force in war also clings about the method of its employment. One school of thought argues that independent air action should be directed principally against the enemy civilian population on the breaking of whose *morale* depends the winning of the war. The other theory is that the first essential is to seek out and destroy the enemy air force, since an attack on the enemy's home front becomes a simple matter of organisation once all

resistance has been broken down. The present writer is definitely of the opinion that the proper rôle of the British Air Force is that of first seeking out and destroying the enemy air squadrons.

In the case of the British Empire, even after we have ruled out of court speculations as to the startling results which may be obtained by air action alone, we are left with the fact that Great Britain, the headquarters of Empire, is an ideal aerial target, owing to the number of Imperial eggs normally in this small basket and that it is close to a part of Europe physically well suited to the establishment of air force bases.

Considered purely from the point of view of defence, it is therefore essential that we should run no risk of becoming inferior to our enemy in the air if the enemy can concentrate air forces in the vicinity of Great Britain, and for this reason alone it is to be anticipated that the British Air Force will play an increasingly important part in Imperial Defence.

Nor will its expansion be solely due to the requirements of independent air action. Both with the Navy and Army new methods of tactical co-operation are developing year by year. To stunt the growth of the Air Force will not only lay us open to independent air attack but it will also cripple our Army and Navy. Yet the growth of a fighting service is bound to be reflected in a swollen estimate. The conclusion that

PRESENT STATE: FUNCTIONS:	THE NAVY	THE ARMY	THE AIR FORCE
	<p>Strong, relative to other navies.</p> <p>Bring pressure to bear on the enemy people by ensuring that we are able to use sea-transport, but that our enemy is not able to use it. To achieve this object the Navy endeavours to destroy all enemy naval forces by—</p> <p>(a) Operations against enemy naval concentrations.</p> <p>(b) Local operations against enemy forces dispersed on the sea routes.</p>	<p>Very small, relative to other armies.</p> <p>Brings pressure to bear on the enemy people by occupying or threatening to occupy enemy territory. First step towards this end is defeat of enemy's army.</p>	<p>Small—but expanding.</p> <p>(a) Brings pressure to bear on enemy people by bombarding or threatening to bombard their cities. First step towards this end is defeat of enemy's air forces.</p> <p>(b) Co-operates tactically with the Navy and Army.</p>
LIMITATIONS:	<p>Naval operations usually produce results slowly, and naval force may be confronted by circumstances in which it can never enforce a decision.</p>	<p>It must expand. This process takes many months and requires sea-transport. It must cross the sea to give battle to the enemy army. It must be supplied across the sea.</p>	<p>Requires a base close to enemy territory. This base depends on sea-transport for its supply, and may need an army to seize it and protect it.</p> <p>The Air Force cannot occupy territory by independent operations, but can do so if its bases in enemy territory are guarded by the Army and supplied by the Navy.</p>
MOBILITY:	<p>Great and large radius of action.</p>	<p>Slow at present. Radius of action variable according to country.</p>	<p>Very great, but small radius of action.</p>

the Air Force is going to make our defence cost us more is unfortunate but unavoidable.

VI

Facing page 100 are some comparative statements concerning the three services. It is a very incomplete comparison, but it may prove worth a glance as a convenient reference during the reading of this section, for now the moment has arrived at which to state some general conclusions.

I suggest that one conclusion which stares one in the face is that our defence depends upon three services. It is quite easy to imagine a war in which one or more of the Services would play the leading rôle, but it is impossible to imagine a war in which the other services would not also have important duties.

Our dependence on all methods of war is a consequence of the nature of our organisation. We depend for success on a number of factors geographic and economic, which lumped together make the British Empire a world within a world. We have irons in every fire and fingers in every pie. In peace time this leads to wealth and prosperity, but it has the corollary of exposing many vulnerable points to the blasts of war. Other countries are not so situated.

In the present state of development of aircraft the air force of Japan is nothing more than an auxiliary to her Army and Navy, with us it has already

become a very prominent stone in the arch of home defence.

At a time in our history when economy is next to godliness and equal if not superior to cleanliness amongst the virtues, the fact that we are bound to depend upon three services makes the finance of defence very difficult. Fortunately, the fourth dimension has not yet come into existence outside mathematical brains, for if it did one may be sure that we should become likewise dependent on a fourth service. Finance of defence becomes difficult because we cannot afford to fall below a one-power standard amongst navies, nor can we for reasons set forth in full in the chapter on "Internal Security" allow the Army to fall below a certain strength, nor would it be prudent to accept any ratio much below a one-power standard in the matter of air forces.

Reduced to the simplest terms, fighting services are made up of MEN and MATERIAL and the second constituent is largely a question of finance. We cannot escape the fact that we must compete financially in the arena of defence in three elements against competitors who, in some cases, can confine their expenditure to two (army and air force), or even one (army) with a little of two.

This does not mean that the existing situation cannot be improved in detail and some suggestions in this respect will be found in a subsequent chapter, but

until the British Empire or the basis of international relationships change out of all proportion, the main channels of our expenditure on defence will remain three in number.

Another reflection aroused by a glance at the comparative table is that the majority of the operations of the three Services are bound to be combined operations. The tightness of the interlocking between the services will vary with each particular case, but owing to the fact that the head-quarters of our Empire is an island, our history is studded with records of combined operations in which the Army is literally pick-a-backed into battle by the Navy. Operations in which two services work tactically together, and in future it will be a case of combining the tactics of three services, produce extremely difficult technical problems, and so far as we are concerned, this type of operation plays a far larger part in our world scheme of defence than it does in that of other nations.

Finally, the great diversity of characteristics of the three services should be noted. The Navy has high mobility, but is not well suited for the production of rapid decision; the Army is slow in movement but is good for producing decisions; the Air Force has small radius of action but very high mobility, whilst its powers of producing decisions are largely unknown.

The manner in which the operations of three services with such diversities should be directed towards

the common goal of victory so that the limitations of one service are discounted by the special strengths of the others is a matter of great importance. Good team work in peace as well as in war is essential to economical success. This team work can only be good if the minds which control the training and maintenance of the services in peace and their operations in war are able to think of their particular service, not as a detached entity, but as one side of a triangle of forces.

CHAPTER VI

THE DIRECTION OF THE FIGHTING SERVICES

I

At the present time each service is trained in peace and operates in war under the direction of a committee. These three committees are the Board of Admiralty, the Army Council and the Air Council.

The Dominion Forces are controlled in an analogous manner, but the committees in Great Britain have normally no control over the Dominion Forces.

The three committees in Great Britain differ from each other in detail but they are similar in the following respects. Each committee consists of a number of senior officers of the appropriate service and one Cabinet Minister. The most important Service member in each case is the Chief of the Staff.

The Chief of the Naval Staff, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff and the Chief of the Air Staff are the mouthpieces and directors of the various departments of the staff found in the Admiralty, the War Office and the Air Ministry.

The Cabinet Ministers are the political chiefs of the Services. It is the business of the Cabinet Minister to instruct his Chief of Staff as to the broad lines of

policy determined upon by H.M. Government. It is the business of the Chief of Staff to inform his minister of the technical requirements necessary in order to carry out this policy. It is also the business of the Chief of Staff to initiate proposals for action in peace or war which seem to him necessary for the defence of the Empire. The Cabinet Minister will lay these proposals before his colleagues, and if they are not accepted it is proper for the Chief of Staff to resign and thus indicate to the country that he no longer feels justified in assuming responsibility for giving technical advice to the Government. It is often said and written that political people interfere with the direction of the fighting services, and that it should be the business of the Government or the Cabinet representative which it has in each service to give the service chiefs a task and then leave them alone to carry it out. This may be good theory but it cannot work in practice. The ultimate responsibility lies with the Cabinet and therefore ultimate power and control must be theirs, but they must realise, and it is the duty of the Chiefs of Staffs to ensure that the Cabinet does realise exactly what is involved from a military point of view, if naval and air force plans are biased from the narrow path of sound strategy by political considerations. An example of a case in which the military point of view wrongly over-rode the political point of view is afforded by the case of the *Lusitania*.

From an exclusively naval point of view, the sinking of the *Lusitania* (humanitarian considerations apart) was sound. She was a very valuable British possession and part of our vulnerable but vital system of sea-transport. From a political point of view it was one of the most idiotic things the Germans ever did. On the other hand it is possible that the Germans were wrong to allow political considerations to hamper their submarine campaign. Having once decided on the campaign and accepted the consequences of arousing world public opinion, it was unsound to conduct the submarine campaign by fits and starts. All or nothing should have been the German motto. As it was they suffered the odium but did not obtain the victory.

But even as it is the business of the Chiefs of Staffs to ensure that the Government understand the consequences of overriding technical advice, it is equally the business of the Government to ensure that the Chiefs of Staffs are given a clear statement of Government policy.

As a rule, Government policy vacillates, especially during a war. This is often troublesome but it is difficult to avoid, for in war it is usually the unexpected that happens and Governments have to make decisions in a whirlpool of conflicting and changing events.

It is the business of both the political and the Service people to see that the Cabinet remains in general control of defence. A dangerous situation arises if the Government surrenders this responsibility to the

Services. The relation of the Chiefs of Staffs to the Government must remain that of advisers, or else a mess will be made of things at the end of the war. It is sometimes forgotten, or so it appears to me, that all wars are only interludes in the normal state of peace and that the end of a war and what happens on that occasion is much more important than the events of the war. The terms of the peace treaty and when it should be made are the important consequences of a war and these matters belong to the political direction of war.

Moreover, some remarks have already been made which called attention to the tremendous complexity of modern war and the fact that the operations of the fighting services are only a part of the whole gigantic conflict. For this reason it is important that the control of the war in its widest aspect should remain in the hands of the people who have supreme responsibility for Imperial Defence, that is to say the Cabinet.

Attention is drawn to the fact that once again in the course of this discussion on Imperial Defence, and it will not be for the last time, we are in the orbit of the problem of how to ensure that the Dominion Cabinets shall share responsibility for policy with the British Cabinet.

Looking back on 1914-18 with the easy wisdom of 1926, I incline to the opinion that amongst all the belligerents the political control of the war was insufficiently strong. In all countries it was not

sufficiently realised that victory does not entirely depend upon the operations of the fighting services.

II

The three Chiefs of Staffs control a number of staff officers who are organised in Divisions, such as "Plans," "Operations," "Intelligence," "Training and Staff Duties."

The Service members of the three committees, other than the Chiefs of Staff, are assisted in their labours by various departments dealing with administration and supply. The direction of the two older fighting services was not brought into harmony with modern ideas on organisation and military staff work until recent times. In the case of the Army the great reform took place as a result of the Boer War. The Navy was given a modern type of staff, the essential feature of which is that consideration of the use of weapons should be separated from questions of supply and maintenance, during the course of the Great War, though the reform began in 1911.

It is because the Navy has got a properly organised staff now and did not have such a staff before the war, that comparisons between the personnel at the Admiralty in 1914 and 1926 are of little value.

It will not be denied here that in every branch of defence the nation must cut its coat according to its cloth, but it is desired to lay emphasis on the fact that

the most expensive economy would be that of abolishing or sensibly reducing the naval staff. Far better to scrap two battleships than to destroy the naval staff, for it is preferable that a man lose an arm than that he lose half his brain.

In order to train officers for service on the staffs at the Admiralty, War Office, and Air Ministry, or on the staffs of the commands, four staff colleges are maintained.

The Navy has one at Greenwich where officers spend a year. Entrance is by selection. The Army has two colleges; one at Camberley and one at Quetta, in India. The course of instruction lasts two years and entrance is partly by selection and partly by competitive examination. The Air Force has a college at Andover where the course lasts two years. Entrance is by competitive examination.

The Navy has another establishment for the study of war which is not found in the other services, and this is the "War College." Its purpose is to give opportunity for the study of war to officers of the rank of captain as an educational preliminary to their entrance into a group of officers from whom the higher commands will have to be selected.

Though perhaps the principal function of a Staff College is that of training men to be competent staff officers, it also has the important result of producing a doctrine. The value of a common doctrine in war has been stated in its extreme and perhaps ridiculous form

by the tag: "It is better to all think wrong, than all think differently." The production of a common doctrine of war in a service is a slow business and must be founded on deep historical study and then written down in manuals.

The best known example of a military doctrine available to the public in published form is the little book known as the Field Service Regulations. This book to an Army officer is as the Bible to a parson.

In peace time the commands of the fighting services such as in the case of the Navy, the Mediterranean Fleet, or "The Aldershot Command" in the case of the Army, are continually experimenting in order to test the doctrine of their service. If a new weapon is produced it must be found a place in the doctrine; perhaps the doctrine may be modified in its application.

If it is a sound doctrine its principles are unchangeable.

III

Both in peace and in war every decision affecting the activities of the fighting services depends upon "information received," as the police say, or "Intelligence," as the military term it.

In order to collect, collate and distribute this intelligence, each service maintains an Intelligence Department.

When war was a simple business of gladiatorial combats between small professional services, intelligence

was equally simple. But now that war has become a national business "Intelligence" has become equally complicated. Not only is it necessary to know all about the enemy's fighting services, but information is also required as to his national *morale*, his financial and economic resources. We must know this intelligence in order to make plans as to propaganda and plans for the war in the financial and economic spheres.

I shall have occasion to return again to this question of intelligence.

IV

In war, and to a lesser extent in peace, the direction of the operations of the fighting services presents some striking differences.

The Air Force as a separate service provides us with little data for this section of the subject, so I will confine my remarks to the Navy and Army. The great difference between the Navy and the Army is that the former centralises and the latter decentralises.

In the case of the Navy, the movements of ships preparatory to battle are frequently directed from the Admiralty. The proximity to London of the main fleet during the last war made this a comparatively simple business, but the direction of operations was by no means confined to the North Sea.

Wireless is the instrument which permits of this centralisation and the cause of it is the mobility and

compactness of naval forces, plus the fact that the Admiralty (or some shore centre) is better able to collect intelligence than is a staff office in a ship. It is questionable at the present time, were the British main fleet operating thousands of miles from London, whether its operations could be controlled very minutely from Whitehall. It is probable that a local Admiralty would grow up at the main fleet base, since the tendency for naval operations to be controlled from the shore is a strong one, and is encouraged by the physical difficulties of accommodating in a ship the staff and office paraphernalia needed for the control of modern naval operations.

The War Office does not control its armies in the field. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff gives the several Commanders-in-Chief general instructions in accordance with Government policy and the local commander then conducts his own campaign. It often happens that circumstances arise in which Army Commanders first conduct a campaign and then carry out the functions of government by administering enemy territory.

This distinction between the centralising habits of the Navy and the decentralisation practised in the Army is of considerable importance when the two Services are working in tactical co-operation. There is another marked difference between the control of operations in these two Services which calls for mention, and that

is the position of the staff officers. In the Navy the staff officer advises his chief, but, at any rate in theory, can exercise no executive powers in his chief's name. All orders even when they deal with matters of detail emanate from the senior officer in the Navy. In the Army the staff officer can take charge of a situation in the absence of his chief and issue orders in the chief's name. The staff officer is a minister plenipotentiary of his general in the Army; in the Navy he is an adviser to the admiral. In the Army the staff officer wears distinctive uniform showing that he is on the staff; in the Navy he does not. Perhaps the most striking example in history, of the immense powers which the Army system may confer on a junior officer, provided he is on the staff, is afforded by the incident in 1914 when a Major from the Great General Staff at Aix-la-Chapelle motored round the head-quarters of the invading German armies, appreciated the situation and then on his own initiative ordered the retreat from the Marne.

The Air Force follow Army practice in this matter of the powers of their staff officers.

So far we have considered the direction of the fighting services from the point of view of each Service. The next chapter will describe the methods by which the direction of the fighting services is co-ordinated.

CHAPTER VII

CO-ORDINATION OF THE SERVICES

I

IN Chapter V it was pointed out that the British Empire is, from a variety of causes, dependent for its defence upon three Services—the Navy, the Army and the Air Force—to an extent unequalled by any other Power.

Moreover, though in peace time the greater part of these services are recruited, controlled and paid for by the people of Great Britain, yet in war these Services are expanded by the addition of Dominion forces which are independently controlled by several Governments.

Our defence is therefore three handed and many fingered and this circumstance imposes upon us very difficult problems of co-ordination.

Fortunately, we have a genius for organisation which is principally exhibited in our habit of ignoring theoretical principles as soon as they interfere with practice.

The facts of this business of co-ordination are simple and not open to dispute.

1. All Services have the common aim of furthering Government policy.

2. Each service is an independent unit, with its own peculiar powers, corresponding limitations, traditions and methods.

The problem of co-ordination is therefore the problem of striking a compromise between the requirements of team-work and the peculiar requirements of each Service.

From a military point of view—and as many readers skip introductions I state again that the term military is used throughout this book in the wide sense covering all the Services—the co-ordination or team-work between the three Services is best considered from two points of view, which are :—POLICY. OPERATIONS.

Imagine Imperial Defence as a picture the Services have been commissioned to produce.

Then policy concerns itself with the choice of subject, the size of the canvas, the cost and the style. Is the picture to be Impressionist, Futuristic, Primitive, or Photographic? In operations we come down to the technique of representation. Is it to be water colours, oils, crayons, or etching?

A moment's reflection shows that there can be no team-work in operations until there is team-work in policy.

The first point to be regulated is co-ordination of policy. There are two images in this matter. Firstly, we want agreement amongst the Services as to the principles which are to govern Imperial Defence. For

example, the Admiralty consider that our safety depends upon the possession by the Empire of the ability to use a certain minimum amount of sea-transport. It is difficult, but not impossible, to quote figures for any given war. In order to ensure that we shall have this ability to use sea-transport we maintain a Navy of a certain strength. The Board of Admiralty in general and the Chief of the Naval Staff in particular have the responsibility of ensuring that the Government of Great Britain is informed of the price (a price not to be measured in money alone) which the nation must pay to maintain the Navy. That in brief is one of the many purely Admiralty points of view. The Air Ministry consider that it is necessary for Imperial Defence that Great Britain, as the head-quarters of Empire, should be guarded against attack from the air. At the moment of writing they have told the Government in accordance with their responsibility in this matter that in their judgment we require 52 squadrons for Home Defence. This is one of many purely Air Ministry points of view.

One could equally well quote an Army point of view.

Now either these points of view are right or they are wrong, and as they represent the points of view of our trained experts in defence, we must assume they are right or else sack the experts. And if they are right, then the Admiralty point of view should be wholly concurred in by the Air Ministry and the War Office,

and the Air Ministry point of view should be equally agreeable to the Admiralty and War Office.

But, and this is where the rub comes, each of the two points of view quoted above, clash when it comes to cost, unless the Government (that is the nation) is prepared to hand out blank cheques for defence. The answer to this supposition is in the negative. I have deliberately selected two important points of view each of which is unanswerable, but it must be realised that there are hundreds of other Air Force, Admiralty, and War Office opinions which are more contentious than the two I have quoted. Especially in respect of air-warfare there are many matters concerning which no practical experience exists. For instance, the question whether two Powers within air-range of each other would in a future war resort to intensive bombardment of the enemy "home front" is a matter of speculation.

Leaving for the moment the question of obtaining unity of Service opinion, I will deal with the second sphere in which there must be team-work in defence policy. Assuming unity of military opinion, agreement is necessary between this joint Service opinion and the views of other government departments such as the Foreign Office, Colonial Office, Home Office and Board of Trade.

It has been remarked in this book that a characteristic of modern war is the fact that the fighting services do not monopolise the war effort of the Empire. This

war effort is expressed through a variety of channels of which the fighting services are one bunch of three pipes.

Co-ordination between what may for simplicity's sake, be described as the joint military opinion, and the civil opinion on Imperial Defence is necessary. For example, the War Office may have an opinion relative to the expansion of the Army which allows for the recruitment of a million men within a certain period. The recruitment of a million men will certainly have countless influences upon Admiralty and Air Ministry opinions and points of view.

The Admiralty, to quote but two examples, will have to consider the effect of this recruitment on the labour supply in shipyards, and they will also have to consider the question of transporting these men to some part of the world.

As a result of discussion, it may be that the War Office will reduce the figure to three-quarters of a million to be recruited and trained within a year. This will be the joint military opinion.

It is now necessary to put this up to a number of other departments, of which, in this particular case, the Ministries of Health, Labour and Board of Trade immediately suggest themselves. Finally a compromise of some kind must be reached, and this is now a Government opinion. One can carry the matter a step further and point out that it may be ultimately

necessary to put the British Government opinion before the Dominion Cabinets and so obtain an Imperial opinion, but a discussion of this highest of all forms of co-ordination would be beyond the set limits of this book.

In summary the two objects of team-work in the co-ordination of policy are as follows :

- (A) Production of a joint Service opinion.
- (B) The amalgamation of the Service opinion with the Government opinion.

II

It is now the right place to describe the machinery which exists for the co-ordination of the policy of Imperial Defence.

The production of a joint Service opinion is primarily a matter affecting the Chiefs of Staffs, and these officers now form a Committee known as the Chiefs of Staffs Committee. It will be necessary to mention this Committee again.

The amalgamation of joint military opinion with political opinion takes place in the Committee of Imperial Defence, though it should be noted that the Committee of Imperial Defence has no executive power.

The Committee of Imperial Defence is a product typical of British Constitutional practice. It was instituted in 1904 by Lord (then Mr.) Balfour, and it

has the function of continuously reviewing the whole subject of Imperial Defence. Up to 1923 it had one permanent ex-officio member, the Prime Minister, and a small permanent secretariat. The Prime Minister usually delegates his duty of Chairman to a member of the Cabinet. It is a peculiarity of the Committee of Imperial Defence that it may summon to attend its proceedings any person whom its chairman considers may make a useful contribution to the subject under review. Most of its work is done through a large number of sub-committees. For example, suppose that the question of broadcasting in war was deemed to need investigation. It is probable that a sub-committee of the Committee of Imperial Defence would be formed and attended by a representative from each fighting service, one from the Post Office, one from the Home Office, one from the Treasury, and possibly one or two non-government experts.

The Committee of Imperial Defence makes recommendations to the Cabinet, and its opinion on any subject is the joint opinion of all the Government departments concerned in that subject.

In August, 1923, the Salisbury sub-committee of the Committee of Imperial Defence recorded that the composition of the C.I.D. should be as follows :—

The Chairman (deputy to the Prime Minister).

The Secretary of State for War.

The Secretary of State for Air.

The First Lord of the Admiralty.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer or Financial
Secretary.

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

The Secretary of State for the Colonies.

The Secretary of State for India.

The Chiefs of Staffs of the three fighting Services.

The Permanent Secretary to the Treasury as head of
the Civil Service.

In addition to these, other British or Dominion Ministers of the Crown and other officials, or persons having special qualifications, will be summoned as members by the President according to the nature of the business.

So much for the two methods which exist at present for the co-ordination of the policy of Imperial Defence. These two methods have been described, but I have refrained for the moment from considering the extent to which they give satisfaction because, before attempting this task it seems desirable to complete the account of what exists in regard to team-work between the Services. So far, I have only touched on the co-ordinating machinery devoted to the big questions of policy of Imperial Defence, there is still team-work between the Services in the matter of operations to be assessed.

III

The operations of the Services depend upon plans, and plans being a product of thought it is of importance that there should be community of thought in the Services. It will be remembered that in Chapter IV there were some remarks on the subject of "doctrine." Each Service builds up a doctrine of war and operates by applying the principles on which its doctrine is founded. Obviously it is most necessary that the Services should have a common doctrine so far as the main principles of war are concerned.

The principal sources of doctrine in the Services are three in number. Firstly, there are the staffs at the Admiralty, War Office and Air Ministry. Secondly, there are the Staff Colleges. Thirdly, there are the Commands. In the case of the Navy, there is a fourth—the War College.

As stated in Chapter VI it is the business of the Commands in peace time to apply the doctrine experimentally ; to investigate the influence of war weapons on the application of the doctrine.

The points of contact between the three Services at the three sources of doctrine are as follows. As regards the staffs of the Admiralty, War Office and Air Ministry, the officers are all in London, and it is not difficult to arrange for meetings to take place between staff officers

of more than one Service. Many such meetings in committee do take place.

The three staff colleges are at Greenwich (Navy), Camberley (Army)* and Andover (Air Force). Two or three times a year the instructors and students at these staff colleges visit each other and carry out joint investigations into problems of defence. These visits extend over several days. Each staff college has two officers from each of the other Services attached to it for part or all of the course. These officers are students, not instructors.

Lastly, there is the question of the points of contact between the Services in the Commands. At home this amounts to very little, as between the Army and the Navy; abroad these two Services carry out combined training exercises fairly frequently.

In addition to combined exercises practised by the three Services, there is a very great amount of tactical co-operation carried on between the Air Force and the other two Services. So essential are air-craft to all army and naval operations that sections of the Air Force are definitely allocated to the Fleet Air Arm or Army Co-operation Squadrons. These air forces (whatever their technical or legal position may be) become for all practical purposes part of the Service to which they are lent. The position of the air-force *vis-à-vis* the other Services is a special problem of co-ordination.

* The Army also has a Staff College at Quetta, in India.

This concludes the outline of the methods by which the Services at the present time arrive at a joint policy, fit this policy into national policy and then co-operate tactically. With this outline as foundation, I propose in the next chapter to discuss the extent to which these methods produce the desired results.

CHAPTER VIII

THE EFFICIENCY OF CO-ORDINATION BETWEEN THE SERVICES

I

ONE method of approaching the subject of this chapter, and it has the advantage of keeping thick ice under the writer's feet, is to use history. Now, it is an historical fact, which can be fully documented, that in or about 1911 the Admiralty had one plan for war with Germany and the War Office had another.

The discovery of this fact considerably perturbed the Government of the day.

At this time the Committee of Imperial Defence had been in existence for seven years, and how it came about that the left hand of Imperial Defence knew not what the right had proposed to do is a subject upon which I do not propose to enter in this book. Let the dead bury the dead. Since 1911 mighty deeds have been wrought and great is the change, but human nature remains much the same and we shall deceive ourselves if we suppose that it is absurd to imagine that the errors of 1911 could be reproduced in 1930. Field-Marshal Sir W. Robertson recently stated :

“Departments of State had acquired during

peace the habit of having wars of their own, and this was continued in the Great War, the result being that by the Spring of 1915 we had the following situation :—

“ The War Minister, supported by most of the soldiers, were striving for decisive results on the Western Front. The First Lord of the Admiralty was initiating an expedition for the capture of the Dardanelles and Constantinople. The Secretary of State for India was conducting a campaign in Mesopotamia, with Bagdad as the objective. The Secretary of State for the Colonies was concerning himself with several little wars in Africa. Finally, the Chancellor of the Exchequer was endeavouring to persuade his colleagues to withdraw the whole of the Expeditionary Force from France and send it to the Balkans.

“ What price had to be paid in the shape of lives and money for this state of affairs must remain a matter of speculation and we can only hope not to see the like again.”

Only by constantly reviewing the machinery available for co-ordinating defence, lopping off an idle wheel there, introducing a new one here, can we make it unlikely that past errors will be repeated.

In peace time, as we described in Chapter VII, the Chief of Staffs Committee and the Committee of Imperial Defence are the principal methods used in order to

obtain team-work in policy. The Chief of Staffs Committee is a recent device, though it would appear that it only crystallises somewhat more definitely the close liaison between the three Chiefs of Staffs which must, or should have existed before the public announcement was made. The Salisbury Committee of 1924 defined the duties of the Chief of Staffs in the following words: "In addition to the functions of the Chiefs of Staff as advisers on questions of sea, land, or air policy respectively, to their own Board or Council, each of the three Chiefs of Staffs will have an individual and collective responsibility for advising on defence policy as a whole, the three constituting, as it were, a Super-Chief of a War Staff in Commission. In carrying out this function they will meet together for the discussion of questions which affect their joint responsibilities." If on occasion it has been found that the three Chiefs of Staffs were not able to give the Cabinet that joint military opinion which the politicians require, then that merely showed that the post of Chief of Staff of one of the services requires very special qualities.

There is nothing very revolutionary in this discovery. One must remember that the Chief of Staff of a service has to deal with problems of extreme importance and that he has to consider them from two points of view. Firstly, from the whole aspect of Imperial Defence, and secondly, from that of his own service. The result must be a compromise. Is it possible to assist these

three officers to reconcile views which must often conflict? To put them into a room and call them a committee is an act they are perfectly capable of undertaking for themselves. More than this is needed.

I suggest that there is one way in which they may be helped, and that is by the Cabinet informing the Chief of Staffs Committee that the estimates for Defence will be considered as one figure. It would appear that some step of this nature is contemplated by the Government in 1927.

Finance is at the root of everything. As things are at present, each fighting service has its annual and independent struggle with the Treasury.

Under the system outlined above, the tug-of-war will have the three services at one end of the rope and the Treasury at the other.

We need not allow our imaginations to stray behind the closed door of the Chiefs of Staffs Committee as they examine the several requirements of their service in relation to the financial limit imposed upon them by the Government, but I can imagine a very powerful joint opinion emerging from the sanctum. This powerful opinion will be an asset from a defence point of view, and its successful production will assume a preponderating influence in the minds of the Chiefs of Staffs.

What action the Government takes upon this opinion is a Cabinet responsibility for which they must in due course answer to the electorate.

If it is the present intention of the Government to say to the services, "Your total expenditure must not exceed so-and-so," obviously the great difficulty of the Chiefs of Staffs will be to apportion this sum amongst the services.

It may be taken for granted that agreement will be reached upon certain large heads of expenditure without much difficulty, but there are certain expenditures which, whilst borne by the votes of one service provide material for direct use by another service. For example, suppose that the Army and Navy agree that a certain type of motor-lighter is needed for combined operations. The thing being a vessel is a naval charge, but the Admiralty naturally feels a certain reluctance to milk the naval estimates for a purpose which, though perhaps of first importance from a combined operations point of view, is of secondary naval importance. Or, to take another example, the Army may be reluctant to sink Army money into permanent defences of a naval base.

The tendency, therefore, is for expenditure on matters relating to combined operations to take a secondary place.

The remedy suggested for this defect is as follows: That the estimates for the services be divided into two categories. Category A—the bulk of the estimates, and to be known as Army, Navy and Air Force estimates as at present. Category B—to be a single estimate known as the Joint Defence Estimate. This estimate to

bear the charge of matters appertaining to combined operations, to be signed by the three Chiefs of Staffs and their political chiefs and presented to Parliament by the Prime Minister. The suggestion that the Prime Minister should present the Joint Defence Estimate to Parliament raises the question as to which minister is to present the Category "A" estimates to Parliament, if the Government are going to consider the estimates of the services "as a whole." A solution of this problem would appear to be afforded by the suggestion that the Prime Minister should introduce the total estimates with a statement of Government policy, and that the three political heads of the services should then be responsible for defending their estimates in detail. It must be admitted that there is more than a suggestion of throwing the mantle of the Ministry of Defence around the Prime Minister's shoulders, but I do not think there is much to be objected to in this respect.

After all, as things are at present, the Prime Minister is Chairman of the Committee called the Cabinet, which accepts joint responsibility for defence, and he is Chairman of the Committee of Imperial Defence, which is our highest advisory authority on defence, so that the proposed action would add nothing to his responsibilities, and the worst that can be said of it is that it emphasises somewhat his responsibility for defence. What it certainly does not do is to bring us any nearer

a Ministry of Defence, which is a totally different proposal and one which must be considered at a later stage in this investigation.

The other machine for the co-ordinating of policy is the Committee of Imperial Defence. This Committee has been criticised from time to time on the grounds that its chairman, the Prime Minister, is overburdened with other work and that it has no executive power. In my opinion, neither of these objections can be fully sustained. The Prime Minister of Great Britain will always have as much work to do as any human being can efficiently undertake, and whether or no he is called Chairman of the Committee of Imperial Defence, he will have to devote a proportion of his time to defence matters. Secondly, it would be most mischievous if the Committee of Imperial Defence had executive powers. Its business is to investigate, review and recommend, not act. Executive power in large questions of policy resides in the Cabinet, which is a committee responsible to Parliament. In matters confined to the services, executive power resides in the Board of Admiralty, Army Council, or Air Council as the case may be. At the head of each of these committees is a Cabinet Minister, and therefore executive power within the services is derived through a constitutional channel from Parliament, which is the source of all power. Though the C.I.D. has no executive power it is a body whose recommendations naturally carry great weight

with the Cabinet. Yet the experience of the past has shown that great disadvantage to the cause of Imperial Defence has arisen due to the fact that there has not existed a Committee or person whose duty it was to initiate the investigation of problems of Imperial Defence from a broad point of view. It is true that the Prime Minister has always had and often exercised this power, but it is a task of such importance that it should not be one of a multitude of duties on a man's shoulders.* To some extent this defect has been remedied since the Salisbury Sub-Committee, already referred to, recommended that the Chairman of the C.I.D. who acts as deputy to the Prime Minister be charged with the duty of keeping :

“the defence situation as a whole constantly under review so as to ensure that defence preparations and plans and the expenditure thereupon are co-ordinated and framed to meet policy.”

There is, however, one respect in which a reorganisation of the present system might be of value, and that

* “The responsibility for efficiency and sufficiency of preparation for war rests upon Parliament, and, in a special sense, upon the Prime Minister. . . . There have been, however, in the past, and there will be in the future, Prime Ministers to whom the great questions of Imperial Defence do not appeal. . . . It is not safe to trust matters affecting national security to the chance of a favourable combination of personal characteristics.”

Committee of 11/1/04.

LORD ESHER.

LORD FISHER.

LORD SYDENHAM.

is the collection of intelligence. "Intelligence," or to put it more plainly "facts and suppositions," is the basis of policy and plans. At present each fighting service collects its own intelligence, but the scope of modern war is all-embracing and therefore no service can possibly collect all that it would like to have. An immense mass of economic information is required in modern war, and much of this is collected in peace time by Government Departments, such as the Board of Trade, Colonial Office and Foreign Office, in the ordinary course of their duties. It may be mentioned at this juncture that the idea that "Intelligence" consists in the collection of a mass of fact which other countries desire to keep secret is not the case. A great proportion of the Intelligence required for a modern war plan is public property in the country of its origin. It only requires collecting and sifting.

It has been suggested that the present system by which each service and many Government Departments independently collect intelligence might be modified by the establishment in London of an Imperial Intelligence Bureau. This bureau would be responsible to the Chief of Staffs Committee and would have a secretariat of its own affiliated with the secretariat of the Committee of Imperial Defence; its secretariat would be seconded from the great departments of State.

The Director of the Bureau would be a senior

officer of one of the services and the appointment would be filled by each service in rotation. The duration of the appointment would be for three years.

This Imperial Intelligence Bureau would become a pool of intelligence from which the Committee of Imperial Defence and the Government Departments would draw their requirements. Its staff would co-ordinate the collection of intelligence all over the world. This should save much duplication. For example, if at a certain port a new quay is constructed, this fact is of interest to the Army who might have to use it, and to the Navy who might have to put the Army ashore on it, and to the Board of Trade who might want to know about it for trade purposes. It is quite possible under the existing system that the fact that a new quay had been constructed at X.Y.Z. might form the subject of four different reports. The establishment of an Imperial Intelligence Bureau should avoid this sort of thing.

One objection to the establishment of such a Bureau is that it would cost money. I am not prepared either to deny or admit this objection. That expense would be incurred is obvious, but economies might also be realised.

If it were found after the detailed examination to which it would be necessary to submit this idea that the net result was an increase of expenditure, then it is

proposed that this should be borne by the Joint Defence Estimates.

It is desired to emphasise that the institution of a Central Intelligence Bureau would be a step needing the most careful consideration, since although at first glance this idea has several attractive features it has also the obvious risk that a department might be created which in its efforts to please four or five masters would succeed in pleasing nobody except itself. There are also several less obvious and somewhat technical difficulties inherent in this scheme.

II

We will now consider the efficiency or otherwise of the methods which exist for co-ordinating the operations of the services. These methods were described in Chapter VII and consist of :

1. Contact between the three staffs at the Admiralty, War Office and Air Ministry.
2. Contact between the Staff Colleges.
3. Contact between Commands.

As regards No. 1. I have heard it suggested that value would be gained if the Admiralty, the War Office and the Air Ministry were linked by a series of tunnels with an adequately equipped American bar at the triple junction. Apart from suggestions of this nature, the only way in which contact between the three Headquarters Staffs could be made more intimate would be

by housing them within one building. This is obviously a Ministry of Defence, and this is a subject which will be dealt with separately. The second point is contact between the three Staff Colleges.

There are at least two reasons why this contact can hardly be too intimate. Firstly, any of the students in one college may find themselves co-operating tactically in battle with their opposite numbers in the other colleges, and secondly, the more the staff colleges are brought together the more likely are they to produce a common doctrine of war agreeable to all the services.

But in other respects disadvantages arise if the staff colleges are squeezed too tightly together. If they are made one a situation arises which belongs to the question of the Ministry of Defence.

It must not be forgotten that one of the important functions, if not the most important function of a staff college is the production of efficient staff officers. Camberley for the Army, Greenwich for the Navy aim at training men who can write out intelligible and logical operation orders for army or naval forces as the case may be. The time available for training is limited to a year in the case of the Navy and two for the Army, and as a person who has attended both these establishments, I can testify that time does not hang heavy on the hand at either place. There would therefore be a danger if too much time were spent in combined work

with other services of producing a half-baked staff officer.

As usual a compromise is necessary, and the present arrangement, whereby the Colleges visit each other periodically, produces good results.

It has been suggested that the three Colleges should be closer to each other, so that officers can meet more easily outside the lecture room. This would cost a great deal of money and, even if desirable, is out of the question in the immediate future.

The next and last point of contact between the services from the operational point of view is that between the Commands.

As already mentioned, this leaves nothing to be desired on foreign stations or between the Air Force and the Army and the Navy, inasmuch as sections of the Air Force are incorporated in the Army and Navy on loan for tactical purposes. But there is something rather different from co-operation between a Naval and an Army Command and an independent Air Force Command.

But on foreign stations the great efforts which are continually being made by the services to train for combined operations are handicapped by the fact that it usually happens that where the Navy is strong the Army is weak, or where the Air Force is strong the Navy and Army are weak. The Mediterranean is an example where the Navy is strong and the Army and Air Force

have few effectives. In Iraq there is a strong Air Force, few troops and no Navy. In India, a strong Army, fairly strong Air Force and small Naval Force. It is only in Great Britain that all the services have strong forces, which in the case of the Navy could easily be increased on occasion by the Mediterranean Fleet.

It is therefore in the home area that the circumstances are most favourable for close co-operation in operations on a large scale between the Commands. It is suggested that it would be of benefit to the cause of Imperial Defence if about once every five years combined manœuvres took place on a scale which would involve at least three divisions of the Army, the Mediterranean and Atlantic Fleets and the whole of the Home Defence Air craft.

The expenses for this performance would be borne by the Joint Defence Estimates for that year. If at the present time the Admiralty were to suggest some such proposal to the War Office, the latter would probably reply: "Excellent idea, but we beg to point out that as it is we can hardly make both ends meet with our training grant." Or if the War Office put it to the Admiralty, the latter might say: "Admirable! but what about the fuel bill for bringing the Mediterranean Fleet Home?"

III

It will be remembered that when the methods by which the individual services are directed was being considered in Chapter VI that attention was drawn to the fact that in its War College the Navy possesses an institution not found in the other two services.

Since there are no Army or Air Force War Colleges (the Army Senior Officers School is a training establishment for battalion commanders) there can be no contact between the services at War Colleges, but it is well worth consideration whether the Naval War College should not be expanded into a Joint War College, or, alternatively, that the other two services should establish War Colleges. Of the two alternatives I prefer the first, although it has certain disadvantages from a purely naval point of view.

On more than one occasion in this book I have insisted on the need for recognition of the fact that in modern war the effort of the nation is exerted in many ways, of which the fighting services are but one group.

Side by side with this fact must be set another. It is that in peace time the fighting services are the only portion of the national organisation whose business is the preparation for war. These two facts produce a situation in which a small section of the nation is charged with the responsibilities of studying and

preparing for eventualities which, if they mature, will affect the whole nation. In peace time the preparation for war is solely a fighting service concern; in war time the activities for which preparations have been made are only partially a service concern. This point can be conveniently illustrated from the last war.

The Great War was no exception to the historical rule that Great Britain when allied with continental powers makes two contributions to the common cause. She contributes her fighting services and she finances her allies. These were our rôles in the Napoleonic wars and in the last war.

British credit, particularly in the U.S.A., was a rock supporting armies of many nationalities. It was British credit that stood behind the loans to our allies. We borrowed from the U.S.A. on the strength of our credit in order to lend to our allies.

In the first place, we nurtured our credit by selling our dollar securities, but these weren't inexhaustible, and there exists high authority for the statement that in 1917 the British Treasury were very hard pressed in their efforts to secure credits in the U.S.A.

Apart from such temporary expedients as selling suitable securities, our exchange, say in the U.S.A., can only be maintained either by mortgaging our future or by exports. There is a limit to the possibilities of the first process, and it follows that the financial powers of

the Empire are dependent for the maintenance in war of a certain amount of export trade.

In 1913 visible exports from the U.K. were 82 per cent. of the import values ; in 1918 they were 40 per cent. and our imports from the U.S.A. had risen from 18.4 per cent. of our total imports in 1914 to 39.2 per cent. of the total in 1918. This immense difference was due to a variety of causes of which the following are some :

There was a shortage of shipping, and a shortage of labour (due to recruitment) with which to replace shipping. In 1918 no less than 25.9 per cent. of British shipping was engaged directly in the needs of the fighting services, and 17.5 per cent. of our tonnage was on the import service of Italy and France.

There was a shortage of labour and material in civil industry. By 1918, 45 per cent. of the male inhabitants of the country had joined the colours, and of the total male and female industrialists in the country $61\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. were on government work.

As Mr. C. E. Fayle—a leading expert on this subject—has aptly remarked : “ We were workmen, general carriers and bankers for the whole Alliance.” To this definition of our war-time activities might be added a number of others. We were also “ fighters and propagandists.”

Propaganda has become a war-time activity of the greatest importance, and all the indications point to this importance increasing.

Though a book could be written on this subject, and Mr. Fayle's "Official History of Sea-borne Trade during the War" is a fascinating account of one side of these semi-military activities, enough has been written here in order to show that in peace time the preparation for war involves far more than a consideration of the activities of the fighting services.

Moreover, these semi-military activities cannot be experimentally examined in peace time. One cannot have "propaganda manœuvres" to try out an organisation. It is therefore all the more necessary that they should be carefully considered from the theoretical point of view in peace time.

As already stated, the fighting services are the only departments available for the study and preparation for war in peace time and, therefore, if these semi-military activities, largely of an economic nature, are not considered by the fighting services in peace, they will be considered by no one.

It is no use saying that soldiers and sailors and air-men are not great economists, or experts in such matters as the mobilisation of industry and, therefore, these matters must be left to the Treasury or some other Government department. The result of taking up this attitude is that nothing will be done. The Treasury is—very rightly—much more concerned with the current Budget than with the possible financial consequences of a war with X.Y.Z. The point is that the experts

exist outside the fighting Services and can be squeezed dry of their special knowledge and cast away—as is the proper destiny of experts. It is only with the broad principles of these semi-military matters that the Higher Command of the fighting Services need concern themselves. But unless the Higher Command of the services is acquainted with the scope and need of these semi-military activities in war, they cannot give sound comprehensive military advice to the Government.

Now it is obvious that these remarks apply to all the services, since these semi-military activities, be they questions of finance, of war materials, of man-power, or of propaganda, are part of the whole war effort. Therefore, in peace time, co-ordinated study of these matters must be undertaken by the Services. At present there is a study of these subjects at the Staff Colleges, but, as already explained, such study is only incidental to the business of producing staff officers. The Committee of Imperial Defence also studies these matters, but the fact that many of its members are busy Cabinet Ministers is bound to prevent that continuous and single minded investigation of the subject which is so necessary. A misleading picture of what actually occurs at present would be created in the reader's mind if he fails to realise that the Sub-Committees of the C.I.D. are slowly but continuously engaged upon the plans for organising the nation in time of war. This

state of affairs does not, however, give to the study of Imperial Defence the same importance as would accrue to it were there in existence a body of experts continuously examining the question of war from the general point of view of defence as a whole.

The proper place at which to study war from a comprehensive point of view is a War College attended by the Senior Officers from whose ranks the High Commands in all services will be filled.

At the beginning of a war the spearhead of the national thrust are the Services organised and equipped as we see them in peace. But as the war proceeds the shaft behind the point speedily becomes so immense that the spear changes into a battering ram. The industries of the country become munition works; the newspapers and pulpits are channels for propaganda; the Treasury manufactures currency, and as the myriad processes of diverting the whole national energy into the channels of war approach perfection the output of man and mind power become uncontrollable, so that the professional warriors in the last war were like despairing mahouts on top of mad elephants on whose trunks were clustered politicians, newspaper proprietors, neutral observers and kings of commerce, and in whose bellies seethed the activities of tens of millions. No wonder some of the professionals failed to come up to expectations; they'd been trained as jockeys, not as conductors of mad elephants.

It is suggested that the creation of such a War College or Colleges—the details are unimportant—would be of great value and would fill a gap in the co-ordination of the services.

Its cost should be borne from the Joint Defence Fund.*

* Since these words were written the Prime Minister has announced in the House of Commons that a War College of this nature is to be established and its first President, an Admiral, has been appointed.

S. K.-H.

CHAPTER IX

THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

I

THOUGH the subject of a Ministry of Defence has been much discussed since the war, it was not new in 1919, various proposals to this effect having been put forward unofficially and officially during the nineteenth century.

At the conclusion of the war when stock was taken of the experiences gained and the great changes—such as the creation of an Air Ministry—which had taken place, it was realised that there was room for considerable improvement in the co-ordination of the Defence Services.

In 1922 Sir Eric Geddes' Committee on National Expenditure recommended "the creation of a Co-ordinating Authority or a Ministry of Defence responsible for seeing that each force plays its part and is allotted appropriate responsibility for carrying out various functions."

The Cabinet Committee which examined the Geddes Report endorsed this recommendation, but whilst admitting that the creation of a Ministry of Defence may be the ultimate solution of the problem, they did "not consider that the present time is appropriate for the fusion of the administration of the three Services

under one Minister.” This Cabinet Committee recommended that “The Committee of Imperial Defence should be in constant session all the year round in order to consider and advise on matters of policy affecting the three fighting Services.”

On March 21st, 1922, Mr. Churchill, then Secretary of State for the Colonies, made a speech in the House of Commons in which he gave the idea of a Ministry of Defence his blessing, but he qualified it by admitting that “it is not possible to create such a body at the present time, nor will it be possible for a considerable time.”

Shortly after this speech had been made, a Committee was set up, first under Sir Alfred Mond, then under Lord Weir, with instructions to consider the amalgamation of the common services of the Army, Navy and Air Force. They reported that “the amalgamation of the common services would only be practicable if it formed part of a comprehensive scheme of reorganisation which provided for the establishment of a Ministry to control a defence force in which the identity of the Navy, Army and Air Force had been merged.”

Then in 1923 a strong Sub-Committee of the Committee of Imperial Defence, under the chairmanship of the Marquess of Salisbury, was set up in order “to inquire into the co-operation and correlation between the Navy, Army and Air Force from the point of view of National and Imperial Defence generally, including

the question of establishing some co-ordinating authority, whether by a Ministry of Defence or otherwise."

This Committee heard a great deal of evidence and in their conclusions, which were published as Cmd. 2029 of 1924, they report feelingly that "No less than 67 Memoranda" were presented to them.

In their conclusions they state that only two outside experts favoured a Ministry of Defence.

Sir Eric Geddes proposed the creation of a single Secretary of State for Defence with a Sub-Minister (not of Cabinet rank) at the head of each Service Ministry.

The Minister of Defence was to have a very small office and a Defence Council, and he would have to obtain the endorsement of the Committee of Imperial Defence before his estimates and his provisions were taken to the Cabinet.

Major-General Sir Frederick Sykes favoured an amalgamation of the existing service departments.

His policy, admittedly a lofty ideal, was that "the real solution lies in a definite, unified, supreme control by a Defence Ministry, with the Prime Minister as independent Chairman and a joint Staff which would really think out defence as a whole."

Until this ideal could be realised he recommended that the Committee of Imperial Defence should frame estimates for defence for the three Services and a special section should be formed for the specific purpose of

jointly framing and supervising major schemes and measures of defence. In addition, as many administrative services as possible should be unified.

Against these two recommendations for a Ministry of Defence must be placed a great mass of authoritative opinions which were against the Ministry of Defence, though they all agreed that some improvement in co-ordination was necessary.

Field-Marshal Sir William Robertson stated :

“(a) Neither a Ministry of Defence nor a combined Imperial General Staff will provide, or help to provide, the co-ordinating authority we require.

“(b) Controlling authority, in its true meaning, must be vested in the supreme executive power, the Cabinet, and it cannot be placed elsewhere.

“(c) Experience has shown that we cannot conduct a great war through the medium of a Cabinet of twenty or more Ministers, and that the duty is best assigned to a small body of Ministers having no other duties to perform. As this organisation is not feasible in peace time, its place should be taken by a Council of Imperial Defence, which will form a nucleus for war.

“(d) In order to furnish this Council with the professional assistance needed, there should be, working under it, a Technical Committee, charged with the investigation of all operative and administrative questions, and with presenting them, with

recommendations thereon, to the Council for consideration and approval."

Sir William Robertson further pointed out that a Ministry of Defence was closely connected with that of a combined Staff and that :

"The formation of a combined Imperial General Staff, consisting of Military, Naval and Air Force officers, working under a Chief (a soldier, or sailor, or airman) responsible to the Government, or to a Minister of Defence, for working out plans of operations on land, on sea, and in the air, and, according to some, endowed with 'financial and strategical powers,' is even more fantastical as well as dreadfully mischievous. An important corner-stone in military organisation is that he who makes a plan ought to be responsible for its execution and stake his reputation upon it. Consequently, the Chief of this proposed combined Staff must draft and issue the orders of the Government to all the Generals and Admirals and Air officers entrusted with the control of the armies, the fleets and the air forces. The confusion that would arise in the three War Departments and at the front, if any such ill-considered system as this were adopted, is quite inconceivable. Further, this Staff would directly interpose between the three Chiefs of Staff and the Cabinet, and there could be no more pernicious system than that."

Lord Haldane observed that : "In the way of the institution of a general Minister of Defence there are

obvious difficulties. If established with anything like adequate power of control, such a Minister would be bound to interfere in administration, just as the first Lord of the Admiralty and the Secretary of State for War are bound to be ready to do so, by reason of their direct responsibility for it to Parliament. The Minister of Defence would, indeed, be looked to as responsible not only for efficiency, but for economy. He would therefore require a considerable and varied staff, whose duties would overlap and duplicate those of existing departmental staffs. What would be the relation of this new staff to the staffs under the three Ministers at present responsible to Parliament, and what would be the constitutional and practical relationship of the new Minister of Defence to the three older Ministers? The former would, I think, be in considerable danger of proving himself to be either too great or too little. He would be too little if the departmental staffs developed to their full inherent capacity and were working out general military policy in conference. In such a case the Prime Minister would be the only person possessed of authority sufficient to enable him to intervene effectively.

“ With the Cabinet behind him, he is in a position to exercise influence as no Minister of Defence could.

“ If, indeed, the Minister of Defence were to make himself, on the other hand, very powerful by equipping himself with an effective administration sufficient for

direct control of the three services, he might well become a rival of the Prime Minister himself. The difficulty does not exhaust itself here. The first Government that made such an appointment would probably make it with great care and with sufficient regard to necessary qualifications in the occupant of the position. But if a subsequent Government came in that were not deeply interested in defence, the temptation would be strong to give the office to an influential politician distinguished, perhaps, mainly for debating gifts."

Lord Midleton stated that: "It is surely beyond human powers for one man to get his mind impregnated with the pros and cons of large changes in three totally distinct services within the limited time for which Parliamentary Chiefs hold office. The fact that there have been eleven changes in the Office of Secretary of State for War in the last eleven years has been very prejudicial to the economy and possibly to the efficiency of the Army. First Lords of the Admiralty attach the greatest importance to their official tours for elucidating by contact with Naval Officers not employed at the Admiralty the problems submitted to them. The over-worked Minister of Defence would be quite unable to find time for such excursions.

"A further difficulty would be the Parliamentary one, since it is often necessary for the Minister in charge to give a pledge during a debate as to the course which his Department will take. Not infrequently it has

happened that by far the most efficient head of the Defence Committee would be a member of the House of Lords ; . . . If the supreme executive responsibility of all three Departments were to be massed in one Minister it would be imperative that he should sit in the House of Commons, and attendance in the House of Commons would add immeasurably to the already multifarious duties imposed on him."

The Salisbury Committee reported against the proposal for the Ministry of Defence and made certain recommendations, subsequently adopted by the Government, of which the most important were :

(a) A re-organisation of the Committee of Imperial Defence by which its composition was laid down (see page 123).

(b) A definition of the functions of the Committee of Imperial Defence which included the following important statement :

" Assisted by the three Chiefs of Staff, to keep the defence situation as a whole constantly under review so as to ensure that defence preparations and plans and the expenditure thereupon are co-ordinated and framed to meet policy, that full information as to the changing naval, military and air situation may always be available to the Committee of Imperial Defence and that resolutions as to the requisite action thereupon be submitted for its consideration."

(c) The formation of the Chief of Staffs Committee, whose duties were to be as follows :

“In addition to the functions of the Chiefs of Staffs as advisers on questions of sea, land or air policy respectively, to their own Board or Council, each of the three Chiefs of Staff will have an individual and collective responsibility for advising on defence policy as a whole, the three constituting, as it were, a Super-Chief of a War Staff in Commission. In carrying out this function they will meet together for the discussion of questions which affect their joint responsibilities.”

II

The preceding section gives a general idea of the developments concerning a Ministry of Defence which have taken place up to the present time. Though superficially attractive, and in this respect the idea of a Ministry of Defence resembles the neat diagrams which can be drawn up for the centralised governance of the British Empire, the idea of a Ministry of Defence at the present time suffers from at least one fatal objection. It takes no account of realities.

The three services have different traditions, different problems, different rates of pay, different weapons and different modes of thought.

It is true that they each have one duty, that of Defence, and I am not stating here that there is anything

commendable or the reverse in the fact that these great differences exist. I wish only to emphasise the existence of the reality which is there and to suggest for consideration that co-operation between the Services will not be improved by any scheme which pretends that these differences do not exist, or can be made to disappear by the creation of a new office. You may repot plants as often as you like and even put three plants into one pot, but the plants retain their essential characteristics.

Moreover, why confine centralising tendencies to the creation of a Ministry of Defence? In Italy, the head of the Government has centralised himself into the Government. In Great Britain we prefer other methods.

It is possible that in the stress of a great war a Minister of Defence, even a National Dictator, might be born out of the desperation of the moment. Be born, play his part and die—assuredly unlamented in England.

But these suppositions are no justification for interference with the natural processes of evolution in peace.

During the Great War a moment arrived when it was seen that the appointment of Marshal Foch as generalissimo was urgent. That moment was in 1918.

In theory the Unified Command might well have been established in August, 1914, yet it would not then have been possible, simply because public and expert opinion,

rightly or wrongly, was not prepared to accept a Unified Command. The same remarks apply to Compulsory Service in England, and a host of similar theoretically attractive but unrealistic ideas.

At the present time a Ministry of Defence definitely belongs to the above-mentioned class of ideas.

CHAPTER X

SOME PROBLEMS OF INTERNAL SECURITY

I

IN this chapter it is proposed to discuss in an absolutely non-controversial manner some of the principal problems relating to the Internal Security of the Empire.

A house divided against itself cannot stand, and it is the business of every Government to consider not only the questions of defence against aggression from without, but also how to protect against aggression from within the political organisation of which it is the temporary trustee.

In most countries the question of internal security is solely one of dealing with rebellion, but in the British Empire, which is a world within a world, the domestic peace of the Empire may be disturbed by strife between two sections of people within the Empire.

The best defence against rebellion is a parliamentary form of government established on the broad franchise of an educated people. Unchanging in its principles, this form of political organisation is constantly evolving in its details. Nevertheless, even in Great Britain where parliamentary government is most firmly established and where it has been so conspicuous a success that it has been widely imitated by nations who are not

capable at present of working its machinery and applying its theories, it is possible that the machinery of civil government may break down if tested too hard by some extremely controversial matter which divides the nation into two sharply defined groups.*

In such a case, if the minority will not bend to the will of the majority as expressed through Parliament, the issue becomes that of parliamentary government versus some other form of government, probably an oligarchy or a dictatorship. In such a crisis the Government of the day has the duty of defending parliamentary institutions with all the forces at its disposal.

It is interesting to note that even as international war has become so comprehensive that it includes the whole of a nation's activities in its orbit, so also is domestic strife now waged in many departments of national life. A Government faced with direct, as opposed to constitutional action, on the part of a section of the community may be obliged to undertake the organisation of various social services.

In the past the Government when it was attacked in an extreme manner found itself confronted with armed rebellion, and it defended itself by using the armed forces of the Crown. Nowadays it is difficult to imagine armed rebellion in Great Britain so long as the fighting services are controlled by the Government, because warfare demands special weapons over whose

* Cf. The Home Rule Controversy of 1914.

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manufacture and distribution the Government have ample control.

Such being the case, the Government in Great Britain are unlikely to be faced with a situation in which they will have to wage civil war. They are, however, always liable to need a considerable force for the maintenance of order. A supplementary police force.

The fighting services are available for this duty of reinforcing the civil authorities in order to maintain order.

When the fighting services are employed in aid of the civil authorities the common law considers that the soldier, sailor, or airman is merely an ordinary citizen carrying out the first duty of every citizen which is to assist the Government to maintain law and order. The fact that the soldier happens to be a citizen who is armed, disciplined and trained to fight, makes him a citizen exceptionally well qualified to assist the civil authorities in the maintenance of order, but his legal status as a citizen is not altered by his military status. Yet from another point of view, the military man is not an ordinary citizen in that by entering the Services he has voluntarily abandoned certain privileges of citizenship.

He may hold political views as an individual and cast his vote. He is permitted, as it were, to momentarily leave his Service and its special obligations. But having cast his vote, he re-enters his Service and

re-assumes his obligations. As a member of the Services he has no politics. He obeys without question the orders of the Government of the day. He is not entitled to withdraw his labour and go on strike. If he does so, he mutinies, and his life is forfeit. He is not entitled to combine for political action. He is not entitled to air his political views in public. He is outside the political arena, though he takes his orders from a Government of politicians.

In short, the military man has made a special contract with the State. He has agreed to forgo certain of the liberties enjoyed by his fellow-citizens in return for certain privileges. The military man has special responsibilities in relation to the State and the State has special obligations towards him. Every Government should, as an elementary precaution of security, satisfy itself that the fighting services are devoid of justifiable grievances.

In the British Empire the Services are recruited voluntarily and enjoy a high position in the esteem of their fellow-countrymen. For these reasons the British Government is in a better position to deal with large scale attempts to create disorder than are nations where the fighting services are conscripted.

It is also obviously sound policy for the Government to assist in every way the efforts of the Services to enhance their prestige and increase the pride and affection with which they are regarded by the nation.

In short, it is especially desirable that the members of the Services should be nationally recognised as having a high sense of the duties of a citizen.

During long years of peace, when the possibility of the need of the Services as a shield against external aggression may appear remote, there is a tendency for the Services to appear as parasites battenning on the national body. Both the politicians and the Services should recognise this danger and take special steps to keep the Services in close touch with the life and thoughts of the electorate whose hearts, in the words of Ecclesiasticus, should be grieved at the sight of a man of war in poverty. Events such as the Naval and Military Tournaments, and the Air Force Pageant have a distinct value from the point of view of Imperial Defence.

II

Quite apart from the question of internal security in its relation to the maintenance of parliamentary government is that of preserving order amongst the non-white peoples in the Empire.

Here there are two circumstances to be considered. Firstly, cases in which we as an alien race are administering peoples according to our political standards, as opposed to those we found in the country ; and secondly, cases in which groups of people within the Empire are inspired with mutual hostility towards each other and

would, if it were not for the restraint of British force, make war on each other. It may happen that these two cases are blended into one, for a Hindu inhabitant of India and a Mohammedan inhabitant of the same country may become so incensed with each other's conduct that their mutual distaste finds a safety valve in agitation against the British.

The principal area of Empire in which the maintenance of law and order is absolutely dependent upon British armed force is India. The Indian Army, whether it consist of Indian troops trained by Englishmen or white troops, has three tasks to perform. Firstly, it must defend India against invasion from the North ; secondly, it must maintain British political practices ; and thirdly, it must prevent warfare between the various races and creeds which inhabit the Indian peninsula. The last two duties belong to the question under review in this chapter.

The maintenance of British political practices means that we consider that India should evolve into a self-governing Dominion and that we do not intend to allow our great political experiment to be stultified by a revolution. It is the declared policy of the British Parliament to provide for "the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to progressive realisation of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire."

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When it is remembered that of India's 319 million inhabitants some 290 millions cannot yet read and write, it is apparent that a considerable time must yet elapse before India is self-governing even were her 319 millions conscious of an Indian national spirit.

This they are not, and though it is not within the scope of this book to go into the details of this subject, it is relevant to mention that there is often a display of strong antagonism between sections of the 216 million Hindus and the 70 million Mussulman communities, and that within the Hindu society there are the horizontal barriers of the caste system.

To keep order amongst the many creeds and races in India there are about 70,000 white troops and six squadrons of aircraft. There is also available a native army of about 160,000 men.

It is impossible not to be astounded at the fact that the great British experiment in India goes forward undeterred by occasional set-backs with so small a force behind it. In Algeria and Tunisia, where the French have done very little to inculcate in the native mind political ideas which, by creating a national spirit lead to a desire for self-government and for the absence of the ruling power, there are $7\frac{1}{2}$ million native inhabitants and the garrison maintained by France consists of over 60,000 troops. The proportion of white to native troops is illustrated by the fact that there are 18 white battalions and 36 native battalions of infantry.

This matter of the need for a British garrison in India has been mentioned at some length because it has a bearing on the subject of disarmament. The security of India, both against external and internal attack, is one of the weightiest responsibilities on the shoulders of our small army. Even so, it is only one of its many responsibilities. Incidentally, it should be noted that India pays for the British troops which garrison the country.

In addition to the need for internal security of British troops in India, white garrisons are also required in the West Indies, in British Africa (exclusive of the Dominion of South Africa), in the colony of Hong-Kong, and the mandated territories in the Middle East.

In conclusion, one may summarise by repeating again that the British Empire is a world within a world and that, leaving aside all questions relating to the need of armed forces for defence against external attack, the Empire has within it so many creeds, and so many races in various stages of advancement, that the existence of an army of the present size appears to but barely meet the minimum police needs of such an organisation. Though the Regular Army is small, it has, and so long as we maintain an adequate Navy it always will have, a high degree of mobility within the Empire through using the sea-routes.

I suggest that we may consider the matter from another point of view.

It may be that in the centuries to come the nations of the world may become federated in some form of universal organisation and owe allegiance to some central governing authority. Marvellous as men might consider such an event it would not be more wonderful than the British Empire is to-day.

Imagine for an instant that this philosophic ideal of a politically united human race has come to pass. Then if it is able to exist with an internal security force whose numbers amount to about one-twentieth per cent. of the total number of its citizens, it will be able to congratulate itself on the economy of its arrangements.

CHAPTER XI

THE CHANGE FROM PEACE TO WAR

I

IN an early chapter of this book it was shown that the national character of a great war at the present time results in the necessity of changing the whole foundation of national life.

It was pointed out that only by bringing about this profound change can the strength of the Empire be harnessed to its policy in order to drag it through the enemy resistance, and that, however carefully this great change-over may have been planned in peace, yet it must take many months before it is even partially completed. To these thoughts must be added the further considerations that whilst the change is taking place the war is going on. The actors are playing their parts before the audience of the gods whilst their dressers are fitting them with costumes, whilst the stage is being built up under their feet, whilst the producer is casting them for their parts and the authors are writing their lines.

In fact, the change-over is never completed, and when Peace comes a vast mass of proposals and semi-completed changes lie on hand and obstruct the

laborious business of effecting another great change equal to the first in magnitude and a close second to it in urgency, that of changing from War to Peace.

The changes from Peace to War are so many and varied that volumes would be filled if they were described in full, and my object in this book is merely to suggest a few aspects of the great change-over. It is intended to create an impression. Some of my readers will have had no experience of what War means when it begins to affect the day-to-day life of the ordinary man or woman. To such I would say that a perusal of this chapter may help them to imagine what it means. Many of my readers will have had experience of this change, but even so, human memories are short and one is apt to forget in the distractions of 1926, the experiences of 1914-18. There is a natural desire amongst many of us to forget those years. I respect that desire, but at times it must be ignored, lest worse befall those who follow after us.

II

In order to give an impression of what would have to be done if we were involved in a war within the next few years it is best to start with a supposition.

Let us suppose that for some reason—and very many possible ones could be quoted—the British Cabinet

finds itself faced with a situation in which a certain Power we will call "X.Y.Z." pursues a policy of aggressive intervention in the affairs of a weak nation we will call "A.B.C."

There would be an exchange of notes, perhaps several exchanges. The League of Nations would be involved. But, sooner or later, a moment might arrive when the British Cabinet would have to decide whether or not they were prepared to accept War. Whether this war was a League war (as would be likely in our case), or whether the League collapsed under the strain and both sides claimed to be fighting under its direction, the practical results would be War.

To choose between Peace and War must always be a terribly hard task, but in our imaginary case the British Cabinet will have peculiar difficulties, since it will be necessary to obtain the concurrence of six Dominion Governments. It is possible that all these Governments may desire to test the opinion of their legislative assemblies, some of whom may not be in session. The attitude of India will be important. If one Dominion, such as the Free State, was to declare against a war, a most extraordinary situation would arise.

It is evident that the imminence of War would call for some immediate change of the present machinery for co-ordinating Imperial Policy.

We will suppose that the inevitability of War becomes

so obvious that the Empire as a whole goes to war, and with this assumption as a basis, I will outline a few of the changes which would take place.

Even before the actual declaration of war Government control would begin to open its claws into the life of the nation. A mass of Orders in Council would pour forth and a host of new regulations would be enacted.

Co-incident with the declaration of war an immense expansion of the Navy, Army and Air Force would begin, an expansion not only of men, but also of a thousand sources of supply and maintenance. The Navy would have to be equipped with auxiliary services. Its personnel would be multiplied several times. In 1918 there were some 3,000 small craft at sea carrying out patrol, minesweeping and anti-submarine services. In 1914-18 the Army called 5,000,000 to the colours, and the expansion in munition making was astounding. A special Ministry was created, which absorbed an administrative staff of 25,000 people. Special factories were built, one of which at Gretna Green cost £8,000,000 and produced annually as much acid as the whole of Great Britain produced in a pre-war year. The Great Armies consumed vast stocks of clothing and armaments. On September 29th, 1918, the British Army in France fired just under a million rounds on that day at a cost of £3,871,000, whilst during the third quarter of 1918 the British Army in France used 641,000 tons of shell. Five and a quarter million of rifles were

produced and 9,000,000,000 rounds of small arms ammunition ; 54,000 aeroplanes and 16,000 field guns are two suggestive figures. In July, 1918, the human effort behind this great production was embodied in between $2\frac{1}{2}$ –3 million persons.

In a modern great war that complete classification of all the national resources which supplies data from which a multitude of organisations can be evolved, is an immense task. New Ministries spring up like mushrooms after rain ; the number of officials becomes astronomical. The public pleasaunces are defaced by the temporary building, tens of thousands of women wear uniform and undertake labour normally performed by men.

The country becomes an armed camp of civilians. It loses the amenities of civilisation, but necessarily lacks the attractive orderliness of professional military discipline. Food is controlled by the Government and rationing comes into force. During the 1918 period 85 per cent. of the food consumed in Great Britain was bought and sold by the Ministry of Food, a gigantic organisation whose staff at one time numbered 33,000 persons and whose annual bill for printing and stationery exceeded $1\frac{1}{2}$ million pounds.

The hours at which alcoholic liquor may be consumed are limited, and strange and irritating shortages of simple necessities such as matches suddenly take place. Many luxuries are not obtainable, though the

weight of taxation debars the ordinary man from considering any expense on pleasure. Income tax rises to 6/- in the £ and is only stayed in its upward course when the economic limit is reached. Chancellors of the Exchequer present budgets in which, to quote a 1914-18 example, an estimated expenditure stands at £2,130,147,000 against an estimated revenue of £842,050,000.

A Ministry of Information comes into existence, and if it should rise from its present state of death it would undoubtedly play a very important part in war. Nevertheless, even during its first appearance it published a monthly pictorial paper with a world-wide circulation of 700,000, as well as six fortnightly papers in as many Oriental languages. It telegraphed a million words a month via Reuters.

From the Constitutional point of view great changes occur. Parliament surrenders most of its powers into the hands of an oligarchy called the War Cabinet, and freedom of speech is largely curtailed.

If another Great War occurs it is possible that certain changes in life will take place of which we have as yet had slight experience. One of these may arise from the need of protecting millions of civilians against gas attack and bomb attack from the air.

This statement of what happens when Peace becomes War could be continued for page after page until a sense of unreality and of nightmare was created.

Looking back to 1914-18 there is something of the nightmare about that period. There is, however, one last change I wish to mention, and that is that from the moment war is declared the shadow of death hangs over nearly every household in the land. Nearly a million dead—that was the price we paid for security in 1914-18. A million of the best men the nation could produce were removed from its midst. It made a profound change in national life.

III

If I have succeeded in stimulating the imaginations of the post-war generations, in making them consider for a moment some of the dozens of peace-time organisations without which life would appear to be almost barbaric and then ask themselves the question, "How would a world war affect this or that organisation?" or if I have succeeded in making the war and pre-war generations bring out memories of nineteen-hundred and war-time from the lumber-rooms of the brain, then I hope that I shall find support for my contention that the peace-time preparation for these changes is a highly important aspect of Imperial Defence.

A few years and a few thousands of pounds spent in planning are acts of elementary precaution which may save thousands of lives and millions of pounds in a future war.

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Good national planning for war may even avert war, for if a potential enemy knows that during the fat years of peace the organisation for transferring the Empire from a peace to a war foundation is not being allowed to rust into decay, he is likely to think once, twice and even three times before he pushes us to extreme measures.

It will never be possible to compute what influence would have been exerted on the plans of Germany had she realised from the beginning that, if she invaded Belgium, the Empire would be added to her enemies. Nor can one estimate with accuracy to what extent the Home Rule controversy of 1914 made the German General Staff look upon the Empire as hopelessly weakened by disagreement at its head-quarters. But to some extent these ignorances of the truth concerning the Empire must have influenced the German plan.

If it be granted that it is most necessary that arrangements for the great change-over from Peace to War be kept up to date, this is a task which must be the special care of the Fighting Services. They are the only people in the community who are paid in order to study life from a war basis. It is not the business of the civilians to prepare for war. It is the business of the civilians to give the Fighting Services reasonable facilities for the preparation for war and to recognise that the Fighting Services are not an excrescence on the body politic but a necessary organ of the body. Similarly, the Fighting Services must never allow their insistence

on tradition and sense of internal discipline to obscure the fact that they are not a community within a community, but a part of THE community.

Such tendencies and traditions as may lead either the Services or the civilians to misunderstand the true relationship which exists between them, can be eclipsed if the civilians will make it their business to understand the main principles of Imperial Defence, and if the Services make it their business to be thoroughly acquainted with the difficulties, political and economic, which the civilians have to overcome in their governance of the State.

CHAPTER XII

DISARMAMENT

I

EIGHT years ago an armistice terminated the first world war. A considerable number of people sacrificed their lives in that war believing that it was a war to end war. A diminishing number of survivors of this first world war have clung—I almost wrote pathetically—to this idea. What are the facts?

Since November 11th, 1918, there has been a war between the Allies and the Bolsheviks in Russia; a war between the Poles and the Bolsheviks; a war between the Greeks and the Turks; a number of domestic wars in China, Morocco and Syria, and there have been at least three occasions when war on a considerable scale was only averted by a hair-breadth.

National antipathies seem as strong in 1926 as they were in 1914. If difference there be between those times and the present it is that the craving for open diplomacy has produced a freedom in expression of opinion in 1926 which was not internationally genteel in 1914.

On the credit side we must note the Washington Conference, an event which, by diverting naval fashions from

the chinchilla of £7,000,000 battleships to the electric-seal of 10,000 ton cruisers and submarines, saved the tax-payers of Great Powers a certain amount of money.

The League of Nations appears to have established itself in the hearts of men as an institution. It is as yet too early to pass judgment as to the principles which will govern the operation of this institution.

Finally, one must note that the cry of civilised man for security rises with undiminished vigour and remains unanswered.

Until 1914 one school of thought in this matter of security was virtually unchallenged. It taught that security could only be obtained by armed force. The catastrophe of 1914-18 proved the folly of this doctrine, and since 1918 a large number of people have come to the conclusion that to undergo economic suffering in time of peace in order to maintain armed forces which do not appear to be able to avert war is more than they can stand.

Obsessed with this idea, staggering under a burden of taxation rendered doubly onerous by the destructive results of the last war, many of these people have jumped to the conclusion that armaments not only do not prevent war, but actually produce it.

The conclusion is false. The pendulum has swung too far and the truth is in the centre.

Armaments are the reflection of policies; a policy is the result of a state of mind. It is well to be perfectly clear on this point. Disarmament does not

necessarily reduce the chances of war. In fact, if disarmament be forcibly imposed on a nation, such an action may sow the seeds of a war, since the disarmed nation will argue that as force bowed its head to the dust, only by the use of force can the lost status be regained. Armaments are the shadow of the War-God. The believers in the War-God are all those to whom the conception of war as the decisive factor in international affairs, is still an eternal verity.

If this belief disappeared so would armaments. There is no reason why this belief should not gradually vanish from its theme in men's minds. Human nature may not change, but there is no doubt that human beliefs are continually being modified.

The value of human sacrifice ; slavery ; the status of women ; are three examples chosen at random whose history illustrates the varying nature of men's convictions. But that we are still many years distant from the universal overthrowing of the War-God is the only conclusion one can draw from the fact that a pacific, commercially minded, intensely practical race such as the British feel insecure unless they spend one-eighth of their national income upon armaments.

This question of the possibility of another war has been examined carefully because it is necessary to be quite plain on the fact that a disarmament conference has got nothing to do with the ideal of abolishing the war-idea which is the cause of wars.

In fact a disarmament conference, or to be more exact "a conference to reduce armaments," implies that there probably will be another war, and the business of the conference is that of arriving at an understanding which will lessen the economic strain now endured by civilised men in keeping themselves prepared for this next war.

The next conference at Geneva will have to deal with the effect of the war-idea, not its cause. When the cause has been removed disarmament conferences will have nothing to confer about.

II

In order to appreciate what will, and what will not be possible at Geneva it is necessary to be clear as to the nature of modern war. As stated in Chapter II of this book, the art of twentieth century warfare is the art of organisation applied to the whole resources of a nation. All the national resources, be they moral or material, must be harnessed to the war-chariot and led up to battle. The old art of war, concerning which men wrote lovingly and practised proudly, the delicate play and counter-play of carefully trained and specialised armed forces directed by experts, is dead. The modern nation when it makes war comes ponderously into action. It is horde-warfare; immensely wasteful; tediously slow and generally indecisive.

As we shall see when considering the question of

disarmament in its relation to what we call in England "the armed forces of the Crown," this catholic nature of modern war which is one of its outstanding characteristics is at the root of most of our difficulties. It is an aspect of the question which the logical French mind has seized upon with alacrity, and French opinion is now laying great stress on the fact that in assessing a nation's capacity for war all its resources must be brought to account. As logic this is perfect; as practical politics it leads to a dead end. For example, one of the main sources of German and Italian national strength for war is the high birth-rate in those countries. In this all-important matter of growing man-power France is notoriously weak. Yet the suggestion that a higher standard of birth control should be introduced into Germany and Italy by international agreement sounds as curious as does the alternative remedy, which would be that Frenchmen should breed more children and keep fewer soldiers.

III

Although the immense scope of modern war makes it economically impossible for any nation to be adequately organised in time of peace for a great war, all nations of importance still maintain during peace certain forces whose principal purpose is war. These forces are the centres of gravity around which the civilian forces when adapted for war are expected to

group themselves, and it is towards the possibility of reducing the expenditure on these national forces that the mind of the average man turns when he considers disarmament.

It is perhaps of some significance that since the Great War certain lesser Powers appear to be coquetting with the idea of abolishing their national forces, presumably in recognition of the fact that it matters very little to a minnow whether he fights a pike with one tooth or none in his little jaw. However, our concern is with the Great Powers.

Their national forces are usually organised into a Navy, an Army and an Air Force. Whether the latter is or is not technically a separate service is not material to the argument. It will be convenient to deal with these forces in the above order.

To the zealous disarmer a navy offers many attractions. Naval material, be it fashioned in the shape of battleships, cruisers, destroyers or submarines, is tangible, statistical and can easily be destroyed. Dockyards are not so easy to throw on to the rubbish heap; they are rooted affairs, and the dividing line between a national yard and a private yard could be made very indistinct. Nevertheless, the verdant path of naval disarmament conceals some pitfalls.

Suppose, for example, that upon January 1st, 1928, the Naval Powers of the world were by agreement to concentrate every ship of war they possessed in the

middle of the Atlantic Ocean and then and there to the accompaniment of much ceremony these ships were to be scuttled. No doubt millions of persons would acclaim this event as an outstanding sign of grace ; a milestone on the upward path along which man is slowly progressing from ape to angel.

Alas ! it is to be feared that the naval staffs of every power save one would stigmatise this grand sacrifice as being one of the most Machiavellian ideas ever conceived by the wily English. For, as the said naval staffs would hasten to point out to their Governments, at the moment when the last topmast disappeared into the bosom of the Atlantic, the British Empire would automatically enter into a state of potential mastery of the sea transport of the world such as it has never had in the past and is not likely to be allowed to have in the future.

For, granted that all warships were destroyed, sea-fighting, if it came about, would revert to the conditions of the early Middle Ages when there was no distinction between a private and a public ship. In such a case as soon as a war broke out a nation such as the British with a strong sea spirit and half the merchant tonnage of the world under its flag would rapidly improvise a battle fleet of armed liners capable of dealing with the combined fleets of Europe, if not of the world !

Nor is there any question that with our resources we

could improvise a battle fleet and lay down a Navy *de novo* for use during the war far quicker than any other nation.

Another snag in naval disarmament, and it bobs up again in a different disguise when considering army and air force disarmament, is the varying importance of sea-communications to various powers.

In the case of the British Empire sea-communications are so intimately connected with our stomachs (not to mention our bank balances) that, generally stated, it is correct to say that in war we attach greater importance to the protection of our sea-borne trade than we do to the attack of our enemies' trade. In the opinion of some people the submarine is the best weapon with which to attack ocean-going trade. This fact gives rise to differences of opinion as to the precise value which should be given to the submarine as a national armament. Differences of opinion, it may be added, whose real cause is normally inadequately disguised under a cloud of platitudes revolving round the allegation (yet to be proved) that the submarine is *par excellence* the weapon for coast defence.

It is not proposed to plunge any deeper into the quicksands of naval disarmament, for though there are a mass of minor technical difficulties, the thing can be done after a fashion and actually has been done. It may be done again until we approach a stage at which other nations will become suspicious of the war-like

potentialities of the British mercantile marine in a world of negligible public navies.

We pass to the Army.

It is here that the conscientious disarmer begins to flounder in the bog.

The unit of an army is a division. But you cannot destroy a division; you can only disband it. Moreover the experiences of the last war prove that divisions can be conceived, grow to man's stature, and pass through the valley of the Shadow of Death in a marvellous short time.

The British, not by nature a militarist race, started war in August, 1914, with a total number of serving and reserve officers of 24,896. Of other ranks in all categories there were 706,618. By November, 1918, they had 193,102 officers and 4,755,242 men in service. These figures are exclusive of nearly 400,000 Indian troops as well as upwards of 43,000 officers and more than 825,000 men who were killed.

These great improvised armies were equipped and supplied on a scale of unprecedented lavishness. Obviously, what was done by 1914-18 will be possible again between 1934-38 should the need arise, and even were the regular British Army cut in half to-morrow such an event could only slow up the rate of expansion of the land forces of the Empire when the call came to be answered.

In such matters one is beyond the reach of disarmament conferences.

In considering the material of army warfare it is not only in the case of the divisional unit that the factors to be dealt with are more complex than in naval disarmament. There is, for example, the business of chemical warfare which already boasts a bibliography. Yet gasses for military use are produced by industrial plants normally engaged in peaceful and admirable production. High explosives have the same innocent and legitimate pedigree; so have tanks, shells, motor lorries, optical instruments, wireless gear, telephone lines, boots (Ordnance issued 40,000,000 pairs during the Great War), trousers (27,000,000 pairs issued), surgical instruments, blankets (40,674,773), motor-bicycles (there were 34,865 in the Army in 1918), typewriters, official stationery, army forms, ink and red tape (number of miles unknown; it became white in the end).

These and a hundred similar armaments appear to be beyond the control of the most cunning conference, yet they are vital to the prosecution of modern war.

Another thorny question which must be tackled is that of the military needs of various countries.

France might argue "We have Syria and Morocco—are we not agents of the League in Syria?—and these disturbed areas need troops." The British Empire must bear in mind the responsibility it has undertaken on the North-West frontier of India. Doubtless Germany would retort, "Excellent argument, but a

bank is a tank irrespective of its possible geographical destination."

Lastly, let us glance at aerial forces.

The difficulty of disassociating the material of peace from that of modern war is particularly great in the case of the aerial fighting, and with the immense development in aerial transport which seems likely to be one of the outstanding features of the next decade the problem will increase in complexity. It is interesting to note that in thirty or forty years' time the fighting plane may have differentiated so greatly from the commercial plane that it will be much easier to classify aircraft into those useful only for war and those whose peaceful qualities make them practically valueless for fighting purposes. But this differentiation is as yet in its elementary stage, and the present state of aerial war is analogous to that state of sea war in the early Middle Ages which has already been mentioned, in which the merchant ship in peace became the war-ship in war.

Nevertheless, national air-forces appear to present a simpler problem to a disarmament conference than do national armies and it may be that the principles employed at the Washington Conference could be profitably applied to air-forces.

Before concluding this outline sketch of some of the problems of disarmament, reference must be made to one line of solution which attracts many minds and that is that nations should agree to limit their expenditure

on armaments to a certain sum. Unfortunately this apparently simple solution bristles with difficulties. The estimates of many countries are so framed that a battalion of chartered accountants would have difficulty in disentangling exactly that proportion of the national income which is devoted to armaments. This might be remedied, but it is difficult to see how to adjust the difference of cost between a voluntary soldier and a conscript. I recollect that when travelling in Roumania last year I asked a private soldier what his rate of pay was, and unless my memory is at fault, he received in a year a sum equivalent to a week's pay of a similar rank in the British Army. Depreciated exchanges affect this question and make it almost impossible to compare the real cost of national armaments.

IV

In glancing over the preceding pages preparatory to penning a conclusion, I am left with the feeling that the reader may receive the impression that I have unduly stressed the difficulties of disarmament. I plead not guilty to this charge. Alternatively I plead that the words complained of were written in good faith and justified in fact. The long catalogue of difficulties which beset the question of reducing armaments is simply a list of effects arising from one cause, that of man's belief in the necessity of war when issues affecting important national matters are at stake.

This is the root of the trouble and if the root be extirpated, the convolvulus of armaments which clogs the national growth of the tree of civilisation will wither away. That certain fronds of this parasite should be cut away and thrown into the rubbish heap may give temporary and welcome relief to the burdened tree, but it is no permanent cure, and even this pruning can only achieve a measure of success if the gardeners are able to distinguish clearly between convolvulus and tree. As I have pointed out, recent developments in man's civilisation have made this distinction hard to detect ; in many cases it has disappeared.

This fact is an indication both of the degree to which we have mortgaged our destinies to man's belief in the inevitability of war, and of the necessity of labouring hard towards the attainment of an international mode of thought which will regard the idea of war as the offspring of an uncivilised and savage mind.

Such a revolution of thought can only be achieved as the result of decades, perhaps centuries, of education. In the meanwhile, let us by all means have a lop with a sharp pruning knife at the conspicuous fronds of the convolvulus, but in so doing we must be careful not to damage the tree or else the last state of man may be worse than the first.

Perhaps this chapter should have been entitled "LOOK before you LOP."

CHAPTER XIII

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

I

IN this chapter it is intended to gather together various strands of fact and opinion and weave them into some pattern of general conclusion.

At the outset of the book it was suggested that every interest of the British Empire demanded world peace. This desire for world peace is the basis of our foreign policy. World peace is the constant aim of the day-to-day activities of our statesmen and their diplomatic agents. It was further pointed out that since internationally the British Empire is one political unit surmounted by the British Crown, it was most desirable that when addressing other units, the British Empire should speak with one voice. If this is not practicable, then the several voices must say the same thing.

Until some system is devised which will ensure unity of foreign policy between the several parts of the Empire, Imperial Defence is handicapped by a difficulty of our own making.

In the present state of human nature there has not yet been evolved a code of International Law or a Court to interpret such a law whose decisions will be

universally accepted and until this state of affairs comes into being, every nation must be prepared in certain eventualities to translate its words into deeds.

That is to say that our national organisation must include arrangements for making war.

This statement brings me to the first of several conclusions which I desire to emphasise.

It is that (leaving aside conflicts of the nature of primitive expeditions) modern war demands a national effort. War should never be considered as an act or a state of affairs external to the whole life of the State.

The decision to wage war has become a decision to alter the whole basis of modern life.

In modern war all the activities of the nation are changed from the thousands of objects which are their aims in peace and they are concentrated into winning the war by bringing pressure to bear on the enemy. The life of a nation to-day is so complex that this metamorphosis of activities can only be effected by government control.

In time of peace we believe a democratic form of government to be good ; in time of war when quick decisions must be made, executive control must be centralised. In Great Britain we have always—perhaps half unconsciously—recognised this fact. In all our Great Wars there has been developed a secret or Inner Cabinet which controlled the great strategy of

the war. In the 1914-18 war it was called the War Cabinet. The elder Pitt and to some extent Marlborough in their day were supreme in the councils of this select body. Perhaps historians will add Mr. Lloyd George's name to this list. These War Cabinets were in their effect comparable to that of having a Minister of Defence and putting his office into commission.

Since War is the antithesis of Peace, it is broadly true to say that the more efficiently a nation is organised for Peace the less ready it is for war. Especially is this true of democracies. For this reason the British Empire is now and is always likely to be extremely unready for war. On the other hand, this disadvantage is discounted by the fact that the potential war-making resources of the British Empire are so numerous that once they are organised for war the Empire is, humanly speaking, undefeatable.

"Once they are organised for war." Those words express one of our great defence problems.

If it were possible to effect the great change from peace activities to war activities in the twinkling of an eye, we could rely entirely on our potential resources and dispense with most of our permanent defence forces, retaining only such force as is necessary for internal security.

But in fact this great change takes many months to bring about, and unless we had permanent Defence

Forces we should be defeated in war whilst we were effecting the great change. The breakwater behind which we make the great change has always been the Navy. In future it may be the Navy and the Air Force.

The efficiency and rapidity with which this change takes place depends upon the extent to which plans have been made in peace. In order to make good plans, a body of men with trained intelligences are required who can devote their whole time to working out how the Empire is to be organised on a war basis. This is not a costly business; its expense amounts to a few thousands of pounds.

The trained intelligences are the Staffs of the fighting services. If there is one department of Imperial Defence in which it is easiest to make false economies it is in the department of thought. The Empire will probably never realise the debt it owes to the small body of staff officers who, under the direction of Lord Haldane, worked out at the War Office the arrangements for the passage of the expeditionary force to France. On the continent of Europe this splendid example of good staff work is considered a model.

It cannot be too strongly insisted that if of necessity we seem obliged to curtail our expenditure on the fighting services, we can only save money on the material side if we are satisfied that through improved

organisations we shall obtain equally good results from the reduced material.

There are, however, definite limits in the reduction of material beyond which it would be folly to proceed unless we are willing to place our destiny under the control of foreign powers.

Our Navy at the present time is of equal strength to that of the U.S.A., and has a preponderance of strength over the Fleets of other Powers. But when we come to examine its responsibilities we see a very different picture.

In Chapter III stress was laid upon the vital need of sea-transport to the Empire. The loss of a certain minimum degree of control of sea-transport in almost every part of the ocean inflicts injury upon us in war. If we cannot maintain a certain minimum of sea-transport in many areas we are automatically defeated. No other country is in this position. Such being the case, our Fleet should be able to operate in any of the great Oceans. In fact, it can do nothing of the sort.

At the present time the Main Battle Fleet can operate in the North Atlantic and in the Mediterranean.

Even were Singapore equipped as a Main Fleet base—which at present it is not—it would only permit the Main Fleet to operate within a distance of 1,500–2,000 miles therefrom.

In comparison with its ancestor in the days of sail the modern Battle Fleet is tied to the land to a ridiculous extent.

In view of the above facts it is not apparent how any substantial economies are to be effected in Naval material so long as the Naval armaments of other Powers remain at their existing level.

I turn to the Army.

In the chapter on International Security its domestic responsibilities were outlined. In considering whether the present size of the Army is justified we must also consider its responsibilities as a centre of expansion for the Imperial Army. In a Great War it may become necessary for the Empire to place 70 or even 100 divisions in the Field. As a foundation for this immense Army we maintain at present four regular Divisions in England and about 100,000 troops overseas.

Even if we rule out of account for the time being the possibility of Great Wars and consider the Canadian-U.S.A. frontier as inviolable, we have a land frontier in India on the other side of which is Afghanistan with an extremely war-like and war-loving population of about twelve millions. In the tumult and confusion of the post-war period there is some danger of the British public forgetting that in 1919 India was attacked by the Afghans and a war ensued.

It was estimated in 1924 by a competent military authority that the military strength of Afghanistan had recently been increased "to 60,000 regulars, 20,000 Militia and 250 guns; apart from a million fighting men of whom about 80,000 can be readily

brought into the field." [See R.U.S.I. Journal, No. 474.]

We have also a common frontier between our mandated territory of Iraq and Turkey, a country which in 1922—after about a decade of more or less continuous war—put 200,000 men into the field against the Greeks.

So that even for wars of the lesser sort our Expeditionary Force of four or five divisions can hardly be described as excessive.

Finally, there is the Air Force. It is not necessary to say more on this subject beyond remarking that during 1924 it became apparent that we were rapidly approaching a position, if indeed we were not already in it, in which Great Britain—the Headquarters of Empire—lay open to an attack from the air launched from the continent of Europe. A programme for the expansion of the Air Force was initiated by the Government of the day and was not seriously criticised from any quarter.

The conclusion which seems to follow from the preceding review of the size and responsibilities of the permanent fighting forces is that—mutual disarmament excepted—there is no prospect of substantial reductions being effected in the sum of £116,000,000 now being spent on the Defence of the Empire.

This is a hard saying and cold comfort to the groaning tax-payer. One can only hope that the pressure of economic facts and the general spread of education

will produce an international atmosphere in which the difficulties of disarmament will be sufficiently reduced to permit of some practical achievement in that direction.

But for the time being the issue is quite clear. Mr. Gladstone speaking in 1859 stated that: "No community which is not primarily charged with the ordinary business of its own defences, is really, or even can be in the full sense of the word, a free community. The privileges of freedom and the burdens of freedom are absolutely associated together."

Whether the privileges of freedom are worth £116,000,000 a year is a political question with which I am not here concerned, though I make the observation that I believe that the majority of Anglo-Saxons will agree that the privileges of freedom are privileges not easily assessed in terms of pounds, shillings and pence.

What I am concerned with in this book is the task of explaining to those who pay the £116,000,000 why the money is spent.

On one hand we have a sum of £116,000,000, and on the other a very complicated collection of problems of Imperial Defence for whose solution the millions are ear-marked. To pretend that at any given moment the last pennyworth of value was being obtained from this great sum would be to pretend that the arrangements for Imperial Defence had ceased improving, which would mean that they were static. Things stationary

are dead. Notwithstanding much ill-informed criticism which floats about, it is a fact within my personal knowledge that it is in the fighting services that the need for squeezing every drop of value out of the £116,000,000 is most fully realised.

This is quite natural since the fighting services are paid by the nation to think about Imperial Defence and there is no reason to suppose that an Admiral or a General is less anxious to put in a fair day's work for a fair day's pay than is, say, the director of a commercial concern.

It is outside the services that one finds an understandable lack of interest in Imperial Defence. This lack of interest is understandable because the civilian says to himself: "I have paid these sailors, soldiers, and airmen to busy themselves with Imperial Defence and I've done my duty." So far as details are concerned the civilian is right, but in a democratic country he must do more than put up the money, he must understand enough of the requirements for Imperial Defence to be able to assure himself that the money is well spent.

If he does not do this, experience shows that he will tend to contract the habit of not putting up the money. Two conclusions arise from these remarks.

Firstly, that the leaders of the nation, that is the Government, must take care to keep the main requirements of defence continually before the people in an

understandable and attractive manner. It is especially important that the people should see and hear as much as possible of the work of the fighting Services.

Secondly, that the experts on Imperial Defence, that is the leaders of the fighting Services, must see to it that the politicians are kept aware of the permanent and changing needs of Defence.

This brings me to the second subject of this book which is that of the Co-ordination of the Three Services.

The position of the fighting Services in the whole scheme of national life has been considered, and if it be admitted that without them the body politic would be incomplete there remains for discussion the question as to whether the fighting Services as a whole fulfil requirements in the best possible manner.

II

There is a general opinion both inside and outside the Services that the subject which most requires attention is that of co-ordination between them. This problem, which is peculiarly important to the British Empire owing to the fact that all our warlike operations are combined operations in some degree or other, was constantly being considered before and during the war. The creation of a third Service in the shape of the Air Force has tended to bring the problem still more to the front.

The subject of co-ordination between the Services

can be roughly divided into two categories. There is tactical co-ordination, by which is meant problems arising in connection with actual operations of war in which all three services co-operate. The solution of this type of problem is primarily a Service concern, and it is a subject which the services have been constantly studying since the war. Examples of these problems are such matters as the relation of the Air Force to the other Services in various classes of operations. This particular aspect of combined operations is complicated by the fact that both the Army and the Navy absolutely require aircraft at their disposition for army and naval operations whilst simultaneously what is called Independent Air Action may be taking place.

Another example of a tactical co-operation problem is afforded by the question of naval, army and air staffs working together during an operation.

It was suggested in Chapter VIII that what may be described as the operational team-work between the services would be further advanced by :

(a) Further efforts directed towards the production of a doctrine of war common to all services.

(b) Large scale combined manœuvres once every five years.

It was further suggested that in order to produce a common doctrine of war it was necessary to have

some establishment at which war in all its forms, military, economic and psychological, would form the subject of continuous study by senior officers of the services. This need would be met by the establishment of a Joint War College. At present only the Navy has a War College.*

The second category into which problems of co-ordination of the services fall may be described as that of great strategy. It is co-ordination in such matters as deciding on the part which each service is to play in the whole plan of Imperial Defence. In this category are problems relating to the allocation of money amongst the services, and problems in connection with the industrial mobilisation of the nation.

Although the fighting services are closely concerned with the solution of the problems in the second category, it is not within the services that these questions can be wholly decided. The great questions of strategy in peace and war float across the shadowy frontier between political and military questions. The questions of co-ordination we are now considering must ultimately be settled by a political decision. This political decision must often embrace Dominion opinions. Obviously, the political people will find it much easier to come to decisions if they receive an unanimous opinion from the

* In June, 1926, the Prime Minister announced that a College for the study of Imperial Strategy was to be established.

fighting services. The Cabinet have the right to expect this joint opinion.

One of the proposals which has been made with the object of improving co-ordination between the services is that of a Ministry of Defence. Though the proposal as commonly put forward generally concerns itself with the centralisation into the hands of one Cabinet Minister of the political representation of the services, a Ministry of Defence would inevitably demand a common General Staff. The practical difficulties which in the opinion of eminent authorities stand in the way of the creation of a Ministry of Defence at the present time are set forth in Chapter IX.

As an advance on the existing machinery for co-ordinating the great strategy of the services, it was suggested that the following proposals were worthy of investigation :

(a) That the sums of money allocated to Imperial Defence in the Budget of the United Kingdom be treated by the Cabinet as a single item and that the Chief of Staffs Committee should decide upon the allocation of the money amongst the services.

(b) That the estimates for the services be divided into two categories.

Category A : Would be the bulk of the estimates and would fall under the three headings of Navy, Army and Air Force as at present.

Category B : To be known as the Joint

Defence Estimates and to include the cost of such items of defence, as for example, material for combined operations, combined manœuvres, a joint war college, which do not belong exclusively to the activities of any one service.

This Joint Defence Estimate to be presented to Parliament by the Prime Minister or his deputy.

In connection with these proposals it is desired to point out that a situation may still arise in which the sum total of the estimates in Category (A) and Category (B) may exceed the total sum allocated to Imperial Defence by the Cabinet. With the proposed arrangement there is, however, the advantage that the battle of the Estimates will only have to be fought once and that the service point of view will be a single point of view. The ultimate decision will, of course, rest as at present with the Government.

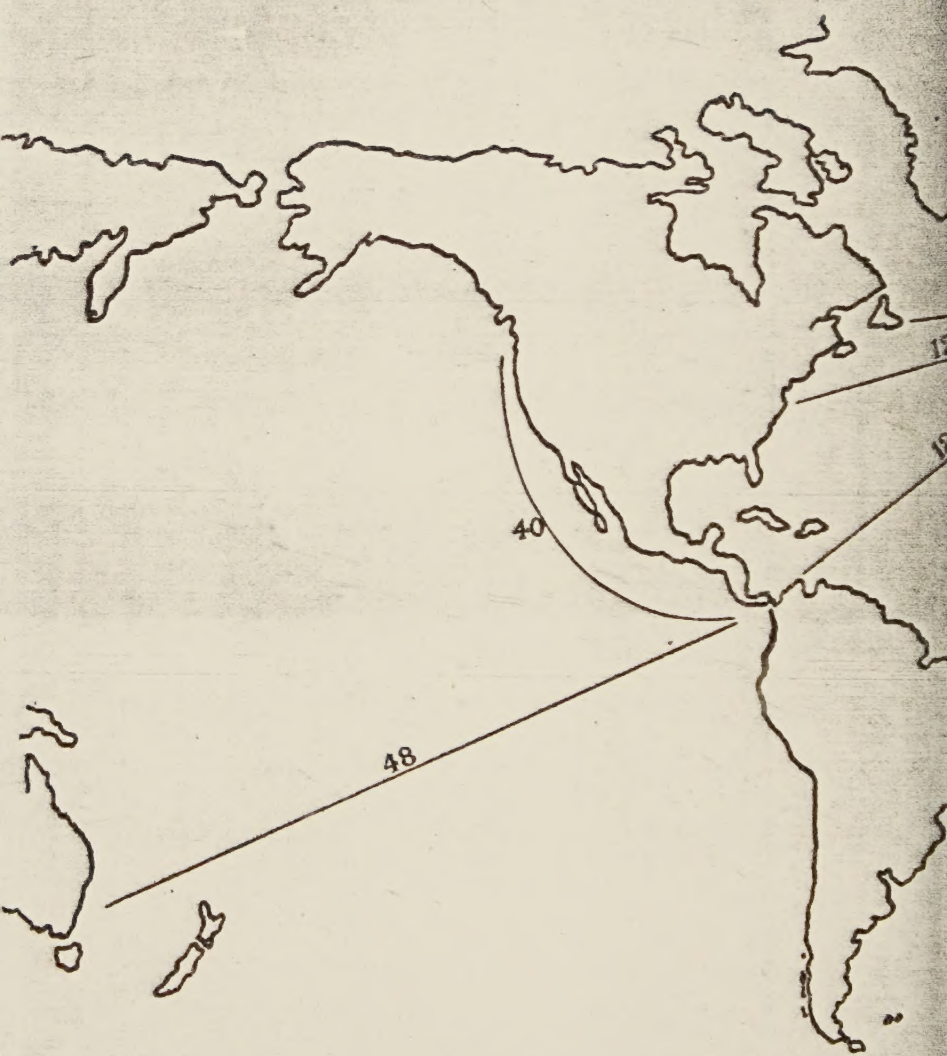
The suggested proposals are open to criticism in that they leave untouched the question of Dominion contributions to Imperial Defence. Such contributions are likely to consist in the development of their own forces by the Dominion Governments, and the more plainly the great strategy of Imperial Defence is co-ordinated in Great Britain the greater will be the influence wielded in the Dominions and at Imperial Conferences by the British Cabinet and their military advisers.

III

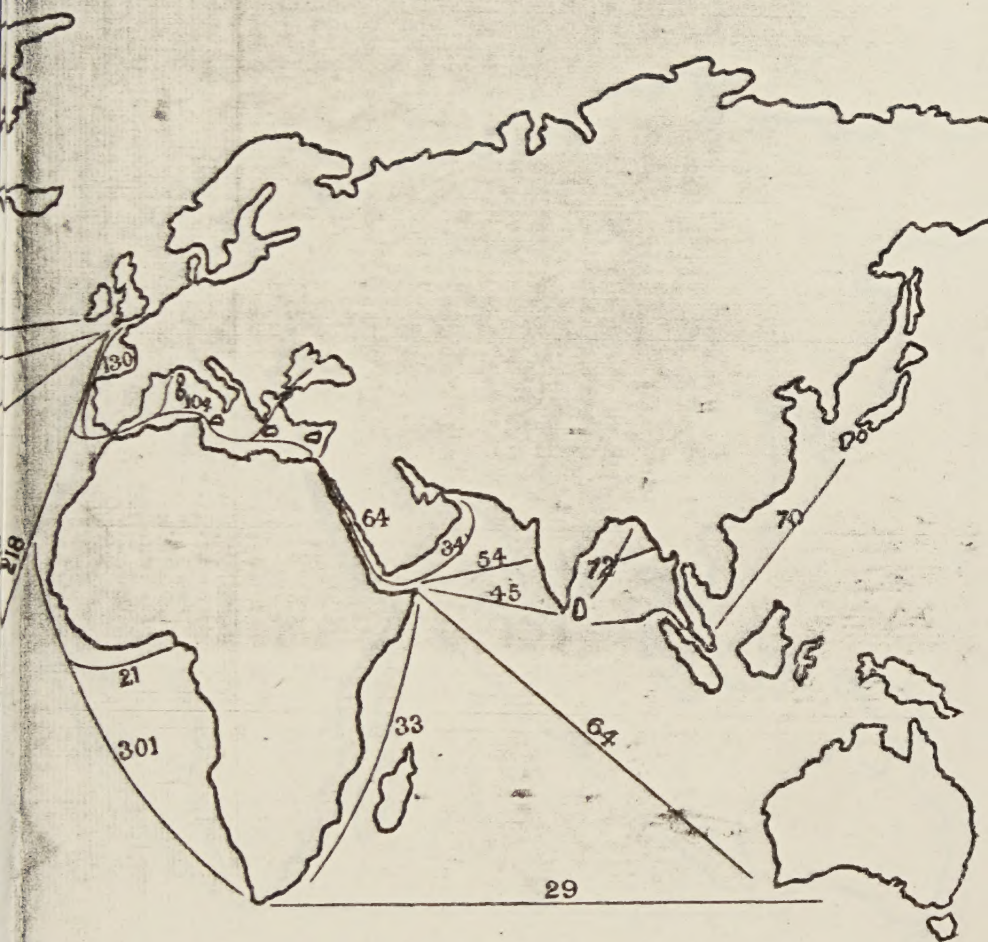
In concluding this short sketch of Imperial Defence I will repeat—as I stated in my introduction—that the reader will be disappointed if he imagines that this study will conclude with a golden remedy, some suggestions for radical reorganisation, which will save millions and at the same time increase our degree of security.

I have throughout my task resisted the temptation to present pretty diagrams illustrative of theoretically perfect organisations, with which one can amuse oneself by centralising here, de-centralising there, co-ordinating everywhere. I have done this not because these grandiose ideas which have appeared from time to time in press and debate are wrong—on paper they are altogether admirable, but because they are not practical at the present time. In grasping at the shadow of perfection we should lose such bone as we have got at present.

Broadly, I have endeavoured to describe the main problems of Imperial Defence. Where suggestions for change have been made they represent what are, in my judgment, the little steps forward along the path of progress for which the time is now ripe. Progress in Imperial Defence is not to be reached by short cuts, they lead to material and organisations which are “in peace a charge, in war a weak defence.”



APPROXIMATE NUMBERS OF BRITISH SHIPS OF OVER 1000 TONS ON
PRINCIPAL TRADE ROUTES



U.K. - 630 } About 700 ships on less frequented routes not shown.
 Europe 90 }
 TONS GROSS AT SEA AND IN TERMINAL PORTS OF
 ON ANY DAY IN 1926.

